

**THE ADOPTION AND ADAPTATION OF NEW
TECHNOLOGIES:
ONLINE NEWSPAPERS IN LEBANON
IN 2008 AND 2014**

Thesis submitted to the University of East London-
School of Arts and Digital Industries
In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Kiray Khoury

2014

**THE ADOPTION AND ADAPTATION OF NEW
TECHNOLOGIES: ONLINE NEWSPAPERS IN
LEBANON IN 2008 AND 2014**

Kiray Khoury

Thesis Submitted For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
To the School of Arts and Digital Industries
University of East London

2014

Supervisors: Dr. Abel Ugba
Professor Noha Mellor
Dr. Valentina Vitali
Professor Haim Bresheeth

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been, and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another university for the award of any other degree.

Signature: _____

Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved and understanding husband, Ramzi, for encouraging me to travel to London to start my Ph.D. degree, after only three months of marriage; he shared my research burdens and was my constant supporter, both emotionally and financially. I would also like to dedicate it to my precious, two-year-old daughter, Reya, who received less quality time during my research; and finally, to my parents, brother and sister, who have been a great source of motivation and inspiration, throughout this project.

Acknowledgments

To educate yourself for the feeling of gratitude means to take nothing for granted, but to always seek out and value the kind that will stand behind the action. Nothing that is done for you is a matter of course. Everything originates in a will for the good, which is directed at you.

Train yourself never to put off the word or action for the expression of gratitude.

(Edwin Arlington Robinson)

The completion of my Ph.D. thesis has been a very long journey - many unexpected incidents happened during this research and most of life's challenges and changes that followed, overshadowed the time dedicated for my studies. I have to confess that I reached a certain point in my life where my priorities had to be readjusted.

It all started when I decided to travel to London in October 2007, to start this research, after only being married for three months; then the challenge became more accentuated on 1 July 2009, when my husband and I emigrated to Canada to look for better opportunities - starting a new life, from scratch, was not an easy expedition; however, the hardest trial of all happened in April 2011, when my father was diagnosed with multiple myeloma (blood cancer); at that point, I felt my world was collapsing, and my family and my father's health and condition became my top priority.

I questioned whether I would be able to finish this thesis, throughout all these many challenges and trials, including my own at a certain point; in the end, life taught me a lesson: 'it is not wrong to fall when your problems are heavy, but the real problem starts when you remain on the ground. After a heavy fall, we have to stand up, gather what remains and go on with our lives expecting the worse and the best throughout the whole journey ahead'.

One of the joys of completing this thesis was to look over the journey passed and to remember those who had helped and supported me along this lengthy but fulfilling road: without these supporters, especially those whom I am about to mention, I may not have reached where I am today, at least not while keeping my sanity!

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength and wisdom to accomplish this research: ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me’ (Philippians 4:13).

Second, from the formative stages of this thesis to the final draft, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my supervisors, for all the hope they had in me, before I ever thought I could do any research at all. I have to acknowledge that I could not have succeeded with this thesis, without the careful guidance, sound advice and insightful discussions of my head of studies, Dr. Abel Ugba. I would also like to thank my external tutor, Professor Noha Mellor, who patiently supported me with advice and supervision, which were invaluable on both the academic and personal level, especially during the last year of this research. I am also grateful to Dr. Valentina Vitali for her helpful comments on my work. Finally, I greatly appreciate the advice and enthusiasm of my former supervisor, Professor Haim Bresheeth: his immense knowledge of the Middle East was invaluable.

I would also like to thank my VIVA panel members, Dr. Nouredine Miladi, Dr. Graham Barnfield and Dr. Roshini Kempadoo, for serving as my committee members. I want to particularly thank them for allowing my defence to be an enjoyable experience and for their helpful comments and suggestions.

I would like to show my gratitude to UEL staff for their administrative help and advice, in particular, Carol Moore, Jill Perkins, Phil Rees, Caroline Lake and Naheed Khan.

It is also important to show my gratitude to, and admiration for, the three Lebanese newspaper organisations that helped with the research – *Annahar*, *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra* – as well as to all my research participants.

My deep gratitude is also extended to ORSAS (Overseas Research Students Awards Scheme) for funding the biggest part of this research; without their financial support, this thesis would not have been possible.

This acknowledgment would not be complete if I did not express my heartfelt

gratitude to my beloved husband, Ramzi Oweis, for, without his full and genuine love, financial support, and sacrifice, I would never have realised my full potential - I thank him every day of my life. I am also grateful to my two-year-old daughter, Reya, for allowing me to spend most of my time on this research; lying on the sofa beside me at three o'clock in the morning while I wrote my thesis, gave me the strength and enthusiasm to finish my work and keep to my deadlines - thank you Ramzi and Reya for bearing with me during the most difficult time of completion.

I also offer my special thanks to Ms Felicity Tessaro for her fruitful cooperation in proof-reading and editing this thesis.

Last, but not least, I would like to show my sincere appreciation to my family, especially my parents Michel and Norma, my brother James and my sister Grace: without them, I would not have made it this far in life. They have been there for me every step of the way, loving me always, unconditionally. They have aided me through all of my tough decisions - your prayers for me were what sustained me throughout.

As this chapter of my life comes to an end, I confess that this research has certainly shaped me into a more mature person and has led me to where I am now. It made me experience more the guidance of God in every step I took, and taught me to trust His plan for my life.

Table of Contents

DEDICATIONS.....	IV
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VIII
LIST OF TABLES	XII
LIST OF FIGURES	XIII
LIST OF APPENDICES	XIV
ABSTRACT.....	1
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1. Contextual Background of the Research.....	3
1.2. Rationale of the Study.....	8
1.3. Significance of the Research.....	10
1.4. Principle Research Questions.....	11
1.5. Research Methodology Design	13
1.6. Newspapers Investigated.....	14
1.6.1. Annaharonline [النهار].....	14
1.6.2. Aldiyaronline [الديار]	15
1.6.3. Elnashra [النشرة].....	16
1.7. Preface of the Chapters	17
CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW	20
2.1. Introduction	20
2.2. News in the Internet Age.....	21
2.3. Newspapers and Social Media	26
2.4. Definition of Online Newspapers.....	29
2.5. The Evolution of Online Newspapers	32
2.5.1. Change in Technology.....	32
2.5.2. Change in Design, Content and Journalists.....	33
2.5.3. Change in Speed of Communication.....	35
2.5.4. Change in Newsroom Routine	35
2.5.5. Change in Newspaper Characteristics	37

2.6.	The Benefits and Limitations of Online Newspapers	40
2.7.	Chapter Summary.....	41
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK		47
3.1.	Introduction	47
3.2.	History and Orientation of Diffusion of Innovation Theory	47
3.3.	Definition and Characteristics of Diffusion of Innovation	49
3.4.	The Adoption and Decision Processes	52
3.5.	Qualities of Success in Diffusion of Innovation	54
3.6.	Research Application	58
3.7.	Limitation of the Theory	62
3.8.	Chapter Summary.....	64
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY		67
4.1.	Introduction	67
4.2.	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods.....	67
4.3.	Ethnographic Observations	70
4.3.1.	Definition and Purpose of Ethnographic Observations	71
4.3.2.	Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnographic Observation.....	73
4.3.3.	Application to Research	75
4.3.4.	Ethnographic Observation Samples and Unites	75
4.3.5.	Ethnographic Observations Sites and Dates.....	76
4.3.6.	Methods of Data Collection for Ethnographic Observations	77
4.3.7.	Analysis of Ethnographic Observation Data	78
4.3.8.	Validity and Reliability of Ethnographic Observations	79
4.3.9.	Ethical Issues in Ethnographic Observations	80
4.4.	Ethnographic Interviews	81
4.4.1.	Definition and Purpose of Interviews.....	82
4.4.2.	Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnographic Interviews	84
4.4.3.	Application to Research	86
4.4.4.	Interview Participants	86
4.4.5.	Interviews Sites and Dates.....	88
4.4.6.	Methods of Data Collection for Interviews	89
4.4.6.1.	Designing.....	89
4.4.6.2.	Interviewing.....	90
4.4.6.3.	Transcribing and Translating.....	90
4.4.7.	Analysis of Interviews.....	90
4.4.8.	Ethical Issues in Ethnographic Interview	91

4.5.	Online Newspaper Content Analysis	91
4.5.1.	Definition and Purposes of Content Analysis	92
4.5.2.	Advantages and Disadvantages of Content Analysis	94
4.5.3.	Samples and Units of Content Analysis	96
4.5.4.	Content Analysis Recording Forms.....	97
4.5.5.	Methods of Recording	98
4.5.6.	Data Analysis	99
4.6.	Chapter Summary.....	100
CHAPTER FIVE: BACKGROUND OF THE CASE STUDIES: NEWSPAPERS IN LEBANON IN THE INTERNET AGE.....		102
5.1.	Introduction	102
5.2.	Lebanon: A Unique yet Precarious Country	103
5.3.	The Lebanese Media Landscape	108
5.3.1.	Political Confessionalism	110
5.3.2.	Ownership	112
5.3.3.	Freedom of Speech	113
5.3.4.	Censorship	115
5.4.	The History and Development of Print Newspapers in Lebanon	116
5.5.	Birth and Stages of Online Newspapers in Lebanon	120
5.5.1.	The Stage of Publishing Archive CDs	123
5.5.2.	The Stage of Publishing an Online Image	123
5.5.3.	The Stage of Publishing an Online Newspaper	124
5.6.	Profiles of the Study Samples	127
5.6.1.	Profile of <i>Annahar</i>	127
5.6.2.	Profile of <i>Aldiyar</i>	130
5.7.	Chapter Summary.....	133
CHAPTER SIX: THE RATIONALE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDIED NEWSPAPERS.....		136
6.1.	Introduction	136
6.2.	The Rationale for Launching an Online version	136
6.2.1.	Technological Flow	138
6.2.2.	Competition in Media Industries	140
6.2.3.	Reaching the Lebanese Diaspora.....	141
6.2.4.	The Arab Revolt and the Use of Social Media.....	142
6.2.5.	Economics Issue	144
6.3.	The Development of the Studied Online Newspapers	147

6.3.1.	The Development of <i>Annaharonline</i>	148
6.3.2.	The Development of <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	154
6.3.3.	The Development of <i>Elnashra</i>	158
6.4.	Chapter Summary.....	162
CHAPTER SEVEN: NEWSROOM ROUTINES AND PRODUCTION PROCESS OF THE STUDIED NEWSPAPERS.....		170
7.1.	Introduction	170
7.2.	The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of <i>Annaharonline</i>	172
7.3.	The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	176
7.4.	The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of <i>Elnashra</i>	181
7.5.	Chapter Summary.....	185
CHAPTER EIGHT: THE USE OF INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS IN THE THREE LEBANESE ELECTRONIC NEWSPAPER CASE STUDIES		190
8.1.	Introduction	190
8.2.	Interactivity: A ‘Buzzword’ for the Lebanese Editors-in-Chief	191
8.3.	Commenting on News and Use of Multimedia Features	197
8.3.1.	The Feature of Commenting on News	197
8.3.1.1.	Comments in <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	198
8.3.1.2.	Comments in <i>Annaharonline</i>	202
8.3.2.	The Use of Multimedia.....	206
8.3.2.1.	The Use of Pictures (static and motion)	211
8.3.2.2.	The Use of Videos	217
8.4.	Chapter Summary.....	228
CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....		232
9.1	Lebanese Online Newspapers	233
9.2	Major Changes	235
9.2.1	Interactivity	236
9.2.2	Content, Design and Journalists	240
9.3	Research versus Theory	241
9.4	Limitations	245
9.5	Suggestions for Further Research	246
BIBLIOGRAPHY		248
LIST OF APPENDICES		290

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Definition of an Online Newspaper that descends from a Print Newspaper.....	31
Table 4.1: Six Prototypical Empirical Methods.....	69
Table 4.2: Profile of three Newspaper Samples.....	76
Table 4.3: List of Research Sites and Dates of Ethnographic Observations.....	77
Table 4.4: Guidelines for Newsroom Observation Topics.....	78
Table 4.5: List of the First Group of Interviews in 2008	87
Table 4.6: List of the Second Group of Interviews in 2014.....	87
Table 4.7: List of the First Group of Participants with Research Sites and Dates of Interviews.....	88
Table 4.8: List of the Second Group of Participants with Research Sites and Dates of Interviews.....	88
Table 5.1: Birth of Online Newspapers in the Middle East	124
Table 6.1: The Major Developments in <i>Annaharonline</i>	153
Table 6.2: The Major Developments in <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	158
Table 6.3: The Major Developments in <i>Elnashra</i>	162
Table 6.4: Description of <i>Annaharonline</i> , <i>Aldiyaronline</i> and <i>Elnashra</i>	163
Table 7.1: Working Routines in <i>Annahar</i> and <i>Annaharonline</i>	174
Table 7.2: Working Routine in <i>Aldiyar</i> and <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	179
Table 7.3: The work routine of <i>Elnashra</i>	184
Table 7.4: The Production Process of the Print and Online Versions.....	187
Table 8.1: Types of Interactivity in <i>Annaharonline</i> , <i>Aldiyaronline</i> and <i>Elnashra</i> ..	194
Table 8.2: The Online Features in <i>Annaharonline</i> , <i>Aldiyaronline</i> and <i>Elnashra</i> ..	196
Table 8.3: Types of Multimedia in <i>Annaharonline</i> , <i>Aldiyaronline</i> and <i>Elnashra</i> ..	208
Table 8.4: Five Multimedia features in <i>Annaharonline</i> , <i>Aldiyaronline</i> and <i>Elnashra</i>	210

List of Figures

Figure 3.1: Diffusion of Innovation Model.....	51
Figure 5.1: First Issue of <i>Annahar</i> published on August 4, 1933	128
Figure 6.1: Three Samples of the Front page of <i>Annaharonline</i>	152
Figure 6.2: Three Samples of the Front page of <i>Aldiyaronline</i>	157
Figure 6.3: Three Samples of the Front Page of <i>Elnashra</i>	161
Figure 8.1: Copy of a story in <i>Aldiyaronline</i> with a single comment	201
Figure 8.2: Copy of an article in <i>Annaharonline</i> with the comments	203
Figure 8.3: A story in <i>Annaharonline</i> that contains text, slide pictures and a video	222
Figure 8.4: A story in <i>Aldiyaronline</i> that contains a picture and a video without any text.....	224
Figure 8.5: A story in <i>Elnashra</i> that contains text, a picture and a video	226

List of Appendices

Appendix A: List of Questions for Editors-in-Chief and IT Manager	290
Appendix B: List of Questions for Online Journalists	291
Appendix C: Born-on-the-web political newspapers in Lebanon	292
Appendix D: Sample of the Recording Form for the Presence of Interactive features	294
Appendix E: Sample of the Recording Form for the Commenting on News and Multimedia Features.....	295
Appendix F: Newspaper Market in Lebanon in 2009-2013.....	296
Appendix G: Significant Dates and Events that Formed <i>Annahar</i> 's History	300
Appendix H: Article of Charles Ayoub on <i>Aldiyar</i> financial Supporters	302
Appendix I: Charles Ayoub Called Charbel Khalil 'a Piece of Shit'	304
Appendix J: Charles Ayoub's Attack on <i>Champress</i>	306
Appendix K: Charles Ayoub Accused Aoun of Being a 'Real Thief'	308
Appendix L: Lebanese Diaspora: World Wide Geographical Distribution	310

Abstract

This thesis investigates online newspapers in Lebanon, and their adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies in 2008 and 2014. The study examines two online newspapers that descend from a print version: *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*. The data obtained are used to examine their rationale and development processes, communication routines and the use of interactive features.

This thesis employed three research methods: ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews, and content analysis. The observation of the three newspaper newsrooms and the interviews with their editors journalists were conducted in Lebanon. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the interactive features was carried out in order to examine the extent and format of readers' comments on the news, and the utilisation of multimedia in the three newspapers.

The Diffusion of Innovation theory (DOI) was used as the main analytical framework for this research, which revealed that the three Lebanese online newspapers remained in the 'trial stage' for an extended period; although the Lebanese newspapers were among the first in the Middle East to adopt an online version, they were tardy in adapting to this new technology - many incidents, mainly the turbulent political and economic situation, interfered with the adoption and decision processes; moreover, the flow of global technology, the competition in media industry, the Lebanese Diaspora, the Arab revolts and social media were other significant factors in the slow development of online newspapers in Lebanon.

This research suggests that the editors-in-chief of the Lebanese online newspapers fell between the 'late majority' and the 'laggards' categories, which are understood to deliberate for a protracted phase, before they make a decision to adopt and adapt. This study concluded that the Lebanese online newspapers followed the same news delivery policy as their print editions by publishing, practically unchanged, the print version of their articles on to their websites; online journalists from two of the three studied newspapers selected the news items from their print newspapers and other multimedia sources, rather than creating them; this practice met fixed print deadlines, but did not fully exploit the flexibility of online newspapers, and therefore, the advantages of the Internet interactive features, such as the readers' comments on the news items posted on the websites, were undervalued. The findings in this research concluded that, although the Lebanese online newspapers under study had upgraded some interactive properties to their websites, they were less organised than the born-on-the-web version which employed dedicated and trained online journalists, rather than charging untrained print copy journalists with additional duties.

Keywords: born-on-the-web newspapers; comments on website news; diffusion of innovation; interactivity; journalists; multimedia; online newspapers

Chapter One: Introduction

There are two mistakes one can make along the road to truth...not going all the way, and not starting.

(Buddha)

What is really happening in newspapers is a massive change management task from short-hand to laptops to mobile phones with camera.

(Martin Belam, London, May 2009)

1.1. Contextual Background of the Research

From simple printing techniques to today's sophisticated digital communications, the mass media have continually evolved and adapted to changing demands and technological inventions. Over the years, a greater variety of mass media has appeared, combining old and new forms of technology; for example, the matrimony of the newspaper (old mass media format) and the Internet (modern mass media technology) resulted in a global, local, interactive and personal news media known as the 'online newspaper'. This suggests that the implementation of new technologies does not mean that the old ones simply vanish into dusty museums; on the contrary, the Internet complemented the newspapers as it became almost unbounded by time and space, delivered immediate news and generally provided free services. George Gilder (1994) described the 'wedding' of the computer (Internet) and the newspaper as follows:

The computer is a perfect complement to the newspaper.... [It] enables the existing news industry to deliver its product in real time. It hugely increases the quantity of information that can be made available, including archives, maps, charts and other supporting material. It opens the way to upgrading the news with full screen photography and videos, while hugely enhancing the richness and timeliness of the news. The computer empowers readers to use the "paper" in the same way they do today -- to browse and select stories and advertisements at their own time and place (quoted in Lapham, 1995, p.7).

On the other hand, Georges Brock (2013) states in his book, *Out of Print: Newspapers, Journalism and the Business of News in the Digital Age*:

The Internet is not simply a new publishing system allowing faster, wider distribution of material assembled and edited as it has always been. The changes wrought by digital technology are transformative and not adaptive: they require

journalism to be rethought. In different societies these changes will work through in different ways and at varying speeds. But the overall direction is plain: old habits of thought and behaviour have to be remade for new conditions (p.1).

In the light of technological changes, most newspaper publishers realised the potential of the Internet and were aware of the necessity to embrace online publishing in their businesses. Historically, Britain was the first country to introduce electronic publishing such as one-way teletext and two-way videotex, in 1974 (Carlson, 2003, p. 2; Wollert, 1980, p.139): both products were generally unsuccessful as they were impractical to use in companies or domestic environments. Most print newspapers shifted to the Internet for online publishing; for example, in 1995, 150 international newspapers had online editions; two years later, nearly 1,600 newspapers existed on the World Wide Web (www) (Levins, 1997b); similar to many other countries in the world, Lebanon was also considering this new technological phenomenon.

The first mass media in Lebanon to adopt modern information technology was the newspaper industry: Lebanese newspapers raced to improve their products by uploading their print publications onto the Internet; due to Lebanon's devastating political, economic and weak infrastructure, however, Lebanese newspapers did not launch their specifically designed online versions until 1996. The first three daily papers were *Al-Anwar* (الانوار, light or illumination), *Al-Nahar* (النهار, morning or daybreak) and *Al-Safir* (السفير, ambassador).

Initially, most newspapers in the Middle East, particularly in Lebanon, set up online news websites without considering the implications or consequences to their businesses; such developments often represent little more than a 'reflex action' (Lindoo, 1998). This dilemma facing newspaper publishers, especially Lebanese ones, was summarised by Jon Katz (1994), a media critic and former executive producer of the *CBS Evening News*:

So far, at least, online papers don't work commercially or conceptually. With few exceptions, they seem to be just what they are, expensive hedges against on-rushing technology with little rationale of their own. They take away what's best about reading a paper and don't offer what's best about being online. That's the point of a newspaper [...] to filter the worthwhile information, and then print it [...] The newspaper needs to reinvent itself [...]. The object is not to replace, or

put into a different format, but to gain a toehold in cyberspace and even absorb some of its values.

Based on the above quote, the situation of most of the online Lebanese newspapers could be described as a replacement of news in an online format, rather than using the Internet as a platform on which to exchange ideas and comments with the audience.

It is important to mention here that it was only in 2011 that Lebanese newspaper publishers realised the potential of the Internet. In that year, online newspapers witnessed major changes in their design and content, as well as the application of interactive features; however, in relation to the capacity of this new media, newspapers on the Internet presented information in different ways from traditional ones. This affected the online newspapers' newsroom routines, deadlines, production processes and hiring criteria; moreover, Singer (1998) points out that, with the interactive features, the journalistic role seemed threatened by the Internet as a new medium in which users are able to interact and react to virtually any piece of information that interests them - the online newspaper is now a phenomenon running alongside the growth of the Internet.

Online newspapers have undergone incredible changes since their first outing in the Internet world (Li, 1998). Singer (1998) raises two interesting questions in relation to the study of new and traditional media: 'How is what we know as traditional journalism similar to or different from online journalism? and, how does the nature of the interactive medium affect what journalists do?' Li (2006) also states that 'the more the Internet newspaper develops, the more questions arise about its operation, functions, effects and interaction within society'; on the other hand, the growth of this new medium offers great opportunities to examine relationships between old and new media, including explaining and predicting what the new medium will bring, not only to the media industry, but also to the whole of society (p. 3).

Since the 1990s, a steadily growing volume of work has emerged on issues relating to online newspapers in many parts of the world, particularly in the United States and Europe; however, little research has been conducted on the history,

applications, and potential challenges that may face newspapers that go online in the Arab world (for example, Fayez, 2000; Al-Grayen, 2001; Al-Jasim, 2006; Ajko, 2006; Al-Jami, 2011). There is a general dearth of work that has attempted to develop theoretical models to analyse the business and production of online newspapers, the way they are used by readers, or the content of these news websites.

According to Massey and Levy (1999, p.139), ‘the existing literature offers a number of often contradictory views on interactivity and online journalism’. Part of the problem may be due to the fact that the field of Internet applications and user behaviour is changing almost daily: this medium is a relatively new communication channel with a very dynamic nature. Research in this area has so far been exploratory and it does not appear to have attracted much objective or academic examination. Exploratory investigation is usually effected because a research problem has not yet been clearly defined, or ‘when not much is known about the situation at hand... [and] ... to better comprehend the nature of the problem, since very few studies might have been conducted in that area’ (Sekaran, 2000, p. 123). This type of study is important in order to gain familiarity with a new phenomenon, and to understand the latest developments in that field.

Although Lebanese online newspapers were introduced in 1996, there is a considerable lack of academic research that explores the topic of online news in Lebanon; most of the papers written in the Arabic language on this subject were translated from foreign magazines or newspapers. The existing research has mainly focused on the subject of the Internet in general; it has not addressed any serious study on the topic of online news websites (Karam, 2002; Al-Abdallah 2005); as a result, the bulk of the research written regarding online newspapers in Lebanon (from 2008 to 2014 - the period covered by this research) has mostly been conducted by non-governmental organisations (NGO) and media companies for marketing purposes, or as part of annual reports about the media in Lebanon (Melki et al., 2012; Dabbous-Sensenig 2007; Dajani, 1992, 2001, 2013); moreover, none of the academic researchers has studied the rationale, production process and interactive features present in online newspapers in Lebanon. No information

regarding the adoption of the Internet by the newspaper industry and the adaptation of organisations to this new technology was found in any Lebanese research documents, books or journals.

There are many possible reasons behind the scarcity of research in the Middle East and Lebanon, especially on the topic of online news: (i) Arab governments provide very little funding for academic research: the percentage of funds available in Arab countries does not exceed 0.2% of gross domestic product (GDP) compared to 3.1% in the United States, Japan and Sweden (Al-Qasim, 2002); according to the Arab Human Development Report of 2003 (p. 73), the governments in Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia spend only 0.26% of their GDP on research; (ii) there is a general lack of research centres and foundations in Arab countries, particularly in Lebanon: only five centres (outside universities) in the Middle East conduct research in the field of informatics, computer and communications (United Nations Development Programme, 2003, p. 74); (iii), funding, laboratories and resources to support academic research are practically non-existent in Lebanese universities; (iv) professors and students show little interest in embarking on academic studies¹; (v) due to the unstable economic, political and security situation in some Middle Eastern countries, especially in Lebanon, most of the researchers emigrated to Europe or the United States; consequently, the research conducted abroad is registered by the relevant universities, and the Arab countries lose the researchers; as previously mentioned, studies of rapid Diffusion Of Innovation (DOI) technology and online newspapers have been conducted principally in Western countries. Several Middle Eastern countries are however, starting to show the key traits of an information society and are producing online newspapers, but minimal data in those nations have been recorded (Li, 1998). Further studies of online newspapers in Middle Eastern countries would be helpful in discovering how online newspapers have adopted and adapted to this new information technology – the main focus of this study regarding Lebanon.

¹ The researcher recalls how the Dean of the School of Communication (where she used to teach) encouraged the professors to take a sabbatical year and become involved in a research project, without success.

In order to partially fill the gap in this area of study, this thesis has applied Rogers' DOI theory, as the major framework for the study of the adoption and adaptation of new technologies in Lebanese online newspapers. In his theory, Rogers explains how, over time, an idea or product gains momentum and diffuses throughout a specific population or social system. The end result is that people, as part of a social system, adopt a new idea, behavioural traits, or product. The key to adoption is that the product must be new or innovative, before diffusion is possible; therefore, this research examines how the Lebanese online newspapers, particularly editors-in-chief and journalists, perceived the idea of launching an online version, and how they adopted and adapted to this new technology in their newsroom communication routines, production processes and the use of interactive features. It also investigates to which category of Rogers' five categories Lebanese online editors-in-chief belong, and whether Lebanese online newspapers follow Rogers' decision and adoption theory.

The contextual background discussed above has explained the effect of the arrival of new communication technologies (such as the Internet) on traditional newspaper and media research, and has introduced the context of the study rationale; the following section will outline the reasons for choosing to embark on this research.

1.2. Rationale of the Study

After five months of in-depth examination of the field of Arab media, the researcher observed that a gap existed for material addressing the acceptance of new information technologies in Lebanon, particularly regarding online newspapers; the period of the investigation to be considered would be from 2008 to 2014. Previous studies on film, video, and new screen media (MA 2006, UK), and journalism: written press and radio-TV (BA 2000-2005, Lebanon) provided the background for further exploration on how the Internet, as a form of new technology, was used by the media, particularly newspapers in Lebanon, during that time.

The transition from traditional, printed newspapers to online versions seemed a challenging and fascinating phenomenon to study. The researcher launched a successful online newspaper (www.tebayn.com) when she was head of the media department of the Syriac League in 2005, which sparked further interest in this new field of communication.

Lebanon was chosen as the case study of this research, as it was arguably one of the first countries in the Middle East to adopt the Internet for its online newspapers (Gonzalez-Quijano, 2003, p. 64). Despite the unstable political and economic environment in that country, its media landscape is considered to be the regional centre for media production (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 13). The researcher's familiarity with the Lebanese news industry, politics, and Arabic language, would facilitate access to Lebanese newspapers, especially when conducting ethnographic observations and interviews; this knowledge would be especially beneficial in comparing local and international newspapers.

There was also a significant need for studies on online newspapers, and the adoption and adaptation to new technology in Lebanon, due to the lack of previous studies of this kind; whilst the studies on online newspapers in Lebanon have been mainly conducted on the Internet, none of them has focused on the adoption of new technology, using the Diffusion of Innovation theory. It may be suggested that the study of online newspapers in Lebanon should place its emphasis on their media function, production processes and messages: Lebanon, like many Middle Eastern countries, is still developing its potential as an information technology society. Online newspapers in Lebanon, at the time of the study (2008), were in their early stages of development and had not used the Internet as widely as in Western countries; it was important, therefore, to investigate the changes that Lebanese online newspapers had made (in 2014), after they had witnessed a major transformation in their content and design in 2011.

This study is conducted as a further contribution towards the knowledge and understanding of online newspapers in Lebanon, and to support the notion that there are distinctions and similarities in the production processes between print

and online newspapers, which will also reflect the relationship between these two media systems. The significance of the study will be drawn up in the following section.

1.3. Significance of the Research

This study aims to make a significant contribution to research on online newspapers in general, and to the Lebanese scenario, specifically. It is expected that by analysing the online newspapers' rationale and development, production processes and communication routines, and the use of interactive features, this thesis will offer an informative approach that expands understanding of the process and methods of the adoption and adaptation of online newspapers to new technology.

Since Lebanese newspapers have recently started to launch their online departments, with designated journalists and new features, the information from this research will not only benefit the understanding of the growth of online newspapers and the roles they play at present, but also help to predict their future trends. The study outcomes will also consider some new aspects that were created in the new media environment, which may allow up-to-date changes in online newspapers in Lebanon to better serve the public. Courses taught in most Lebanese universities on this subject lack an official course book for the material, and thus depend on papers presented in conferences and articles extracted from journals². It is hoped therefore, that this research on the topic of online news in Lebanon, will be one of particular interest to Lebanese professors and academics.

The findings presented in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight of this research, produce new data and knowledge in the field of online news; on the other hand, Chapter Five offers an academic mapping of the history and development of news websites in the Middle East in general, and in Lebanon, specifically. It is hoped that, by

² Based on an interview conducted in 2008 with Dr. May Al-Abdallah, a media professor in the Faculty of Information and Documentation in the Lebanese University, Beirut.

combining the four chapters, an original approach to the revolution in journalism will emerge.

As such, this study presents primary, unique data on the rationale and development of Lebanese online newspapers: it is the first Ph.D. research that investigates a born-on-the-web newspaper in Lebanon, *Elnashra*; while some media research has mentioned the history of *Annahar* newspaper, none has either discussed, analysed or criticised its online version, or its adaptation to new technology such as the interactive features³. Similarly, the history of *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra* have not been discussed in any previous academic research, therefore, the information that was collected during the researcher's ethnographic observations, interviews and content analyses, may be considered valuable and possibly unprecedented.

The potential significance of a study that provides systematic data on the Lebanese online newspapers is expected to become evident during the interviews with editors-in-chief, journalists and professors. A review of the principle research questions that this paper aims to answer follows in the next section.

1.4. Principle Research Questions

The research questions of the study have been developed in order to explore the adoption and adaptation of online newspapers in Lebanon, in terms of their justification and development, production processes and interactive features. Four research questions have been considered in order to achieve the answers to this research.

- 1- *Why have newspapers in Lebanon launched an online version?*
- 2- *How are the three Lebanese online newspapers under study adapting to the new media technology?*

³ According to Wadih Tuani, the IT manager of *Annahar* (2008) this researcher is the first to study the online version of *Annahar*.

These two research questions will help to examine the reasoning and factors behind launching online newspapers in Lebanon. The research investigates the birth and development of those that have descended from a print counterpart, *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*, in addition to a born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*.

- 3- *What are the implications of the adoption of these new technologies on work routine, production processes and employment criteria?*

This research question will provide insights into the newsroom communication routines, the production processes and the employment criteria.

- 4- *To what extent did the studied electronic newspapers in Lebanon use interactive elements, particularly comments on the news and multimedia features?*

This final research question will identify the level of potential of new communication technology, mainly commenting on the news and multimedia features, that has been utilised in electronic newspapers in Lebanon. The outcome will reflect the services offered by them, at the time of the study.

These four research questions will help in investigating the relationships and differences between samples of online editions of print newspapers and those of a born-on-the-web one, in terms of their functionality and use of interactive journalistic elements. They should also show the development of the Lebanese online newspapers in 2008 and 2014.

Qualitative ethnographic observation, including newsroom observation and interviews, will be used to explore the differences in production processes and newsroom routines of two print newspaper samples and their electronic counterparts, in addition to a born-on-the-web newspaper. Quantitative and qualitative content analyses of print and online newspaper samples will also be conducted in order to examine the amount of news comments and multimedia used, and the characteristics, frequency, purpose and location of two interactive

features: commenting on news and the use of multimedia in online newspapers. This research methodology will be discussed in the next section.

1.5. Research Methodology Design

In order to investigate the history, development, adoption and adaptation to new technologies of Lebanese online newspapers, in terms of their rationale, production processes and use of multimedia features, the study needs to be combined with an examination of communication in news organisations and the context in which they operate. Maykut and Morehouse (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006) suggest that one of the four factors that help build credibility in a qualitative research project is ‘multiple methods of data collection’. The components of this multiple research methodology underpin one another and therefore yield superior reliability. This thesis has utilised ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews, and content analysis in order to increase the credibility of the study findings.

The study will therefore investigate not only the production processes and news room communication routines but also the quantity of interactivity used by three online Lebanese newspaper samples through ethnographic observations, in order to gather the data on why Lebanese newspapers launched their online versions, and how they adapted to new technologies. These ethnographic interviews should provide perspectives on the journalists’ routines and the work of online newspapers; nevertheless, they cannot assist alone in exploring the adoption and adaptation to new technology, therefore, newspaper content analysis will be conducted on the findings by investigating the use of interactive options, mainly commenting on news and multimedia features in the Lebanese online newspapers.

These three research methods will be combined to enable the thorough examination of the research questions and to generate debates regarding the diffusion of innovation concept and the study of production processes in print and electronic newspapers in Lebanon.

1.6. Newspapers Investigated

As mentioned above, the focus of this research is the online newspapers in Lebanon and their adoption and adaptation to new technology. In order to fulfil this aim, the decision was taken to conduct ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews and content analysis on three different online newspapers: *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*. These newspapers were selected for the following reasons that follow.

1.6.1. *Annaharonline* [النهار]

Annaharonline is the online version of the print *Annahar* newspaper. *Annahar* is Lebanon's quality daily newspaper and is widely accepted by a large number of readers across the nation; in 2009, Ipsos Stat survey revealed that *Annahar* is one of five most popular newspapers in Beirut (Jad Melki et al., 2012). It aims to offer the most recent, accurate and reliable coverage relating to Lebanese society, and has been widely accepted and referred to, by both Lebanese and international communities. According to the American journalist, Charles Glass, *Annahar* is Lebanon's equivalent of the *New York Times* (Glass, 2007). During the mid-1990s, *Annahar* had the highest circulation in Lebanon (Kamalipour and Mowlana, 1994) - according to the Lebanese Ministry of information, in 2012 *Annahar* had a circulation of 45,000 copies. In 2000, *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* were arguably the most influential daily papers in terms of raw circulation numbers (Jad Melki et al., 2012, p.23).

In 1942, *Annahar* promoted the creation of a Journalists' Association to preserve the liberties of the press and to demand legislation assuring fair trial and protection from arbitrary suspension; the association evolved into the Press Syndicate, a national body with binding authority in all professional matters. In January 1993, *Annahar* won the prize for the 'Second Best International Newspaper' (after the *Financial Times*); moreover, the World Association of Newspapers established the *Gebran Tueni Award* in 2006, after his assassination, which would be bestowed on 'a newspaper publisher or editor in the Arab world who demonstrates the free press value' (Heslop, 2011).

It can be observed, therefore, that *Annaharonline* descended from a pioneer Arabic and Lebanese newspaper launched in 1933; on the other hand, *Annaharonline* was founded in 1996 and was one of the first online newspapers in Lebanon; this makes *Annahar* and *Annaharonline* the oldest print and online newspapers in that country; it is interesting to note that the online version was a replica copy of its print version. In 2011, however, *Annaharonline* witnessed major changes, one being the addition of new interactive features to its news stories; according to Arab Media Outlook (2009 – 2013) and Nielsen⁴, *Annahar* and *Annaharonline* are among the top five of the seven most read and visited newspapers in Lebanon. A discussion on the long history and experience in the field of journalism of *Annahar*, and its more modern web-based edition, *Annaharonline*, is presented in this research.

1.6.2. Aldiyaronline [الديار]

Aldiyaronline descends from *Aldiyar*, a popular print newspaper whose popularity lies in the considerable amount of advertisements printed on its pages. It is known as a ‘view paper’ that reflects the political opinion and affiliations of its owner, Charles Ayoub, and the new features and design displayed every time *Aldiyaronline* is accessed. A few years ago, *Aldiyar* implemented an annual fee and a subscription policy in order to be able to read the news, online. This system lasted only a few months, however, and soon reverted back to providing readers free access on the Internet⁵.

Aldiyar was the last Lebanese print newspaper to launch an online version in 2004⁶; up until 2011, *Aldiyar* lacked a discrete online department, and its content remained a replica of the printed edition. Finally, although *Aldiyar* is the fourth most read Lebanese print newspaper, its online edition, *Aldiyaronline*, does not appear among the top eight most read online newspapers (Arab Media Outlook (2009-2013; and the Nielsen Company). Investigating *Aldiyaronline* will show

⁴ A global consumer information and measurement company, available at: <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports.html>

⁵ Editor-in-chief of *Aldiyar*, Najwa Maroun, during the ethnographic interviews in 2008.

⁶ Editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, Fady Chami, during the Skype interview in 2014.

how an online newspaper superseded an unstable political and financial dilemma and managed to adopt and adapt to new technology.

1.6.3. Elnashra [النشرة]

Elnashra is a born-on-the-web newspaper without a pre-existing print version. It is the second most visited news website, according to Melki et al., (2012, p. 22) and was the fifth most popular news website in 2013 (Arab Media Outlook (2009-2013; and Nielsen Company). *Elnashra* is a self-proclaimed independent news site: in reality, its content tends to sympathise with the perspectives of the March 8 Alliance⁷ and the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM)⁸. *Elnashra* offers Lebanese and international viewers instant and daily news, covering politics, technology, business, and so on. It was also the first website to establish a 'virtual election' which allowed every Lebanese to vote online for the Lebanese parliamentary elections in June 2009; although *Elnashra* witnessed major changes in its content and design in 2011, until the date of conducting this research (April 2014), *Elnashra* still had not adopted interactive features such as commenting on the news. This investigation into the rationale, development, communication routines, production process, employment criteria and interactive features in a born-on-the-web newspaper, will elucidate the standards and positions of online newspapers in Lebanon. It may also help to understand the differences and similarities between online newspapers that are descendants of a print parent, and those 'born-on-the-web'.

⁷ March 8' is a coalition of various political parties in Lebanon. The name dates back to March 8, 2005 when different parties called for a mass demonstration in downtown Beirut in response to the Cedar Revolution which was launched after the assassination of Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, on 14 February 2005, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_8_Alliance [retrieved 11 April 2014]

⁸ The FPM (the Free Patriotic Movement) is a Lebanese political party led by General Michel Aoun. It is the second largest party in the Lebanese parliament after the *Future Movement*. It is the main party of the March 8 Alliance, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Patriotic_Movement [retrieved 11 April 2014]

1.7. Preface of the Chapters

Roger Wimmer and Joseph Dominick (1994, p.11) believe that a typical research process should include eight steps: selecting a problem, reviewing existing research and theory, developing hypotheses or research questions, determining an appropriate methodology/research design, collecting relevant data, analysing and interpreting the results, presenting the results in an appropriate form, and finally, replicating the study, if necessary.

Based on the Wimmer and Dominick concept, this research starts by reviewing existing research. **Chapter Two** presents the background of the research and the literature review. It offers an overview of the conceptual research related to the main topic of this thesis, and thoroughly discusses newspapers in the Internet age, newspapers and social media, and the evolution, definition, characteristics, benefits and limitations of online newspapers.

Chapter Three forms the theoretical framework of this research. It discusses and analyses the history and orientation of the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, followed by analyses of the processes of adoption and decision-making, and an explanation of the qualities of success through DOI. Finally, this chapter criticises the application and limitations of the theory of DOI to this research; by analysing the elements of this theory and the five different members of ‘innovativeness’, this chapter sets the theoretical framework for investigation on how Lebanese editors and journalists adapted to, and adopted, new technologies.

Chapter Four demonstrates how this study has been conducted in order to answer the research questions. The research methodology of quantitative and qualitative approaches is addressed, and includes the three research methods used in this study: ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews and content analysis; these are examined in terms of the rationale and purposes behind each research method, research sites, study samples, data collection and data analysis procedures, together with the issues of validity, reliability and ethics of the study.

Following the literature review, the theoretical framework and the methodology used, **Chapter Five** sets the background for the case studies and explains the position of Lebanese newspapers in the Internet age. This chapter starts by presenting the uniqueness of Lebanon, the country in which this study was conducted, and sheds light on the Lebanese mass media landscape with regard to its political confessionalism, ownership, freedom of speech and censorship. Since two of the studied online newspapers descend from print parents, the history and development of print newspapers have been highlighted in this chapter. This sets the background for studying the birth and progressive stages of online newspapers in Lebanon. Finally, an overview of the profile of the studied newspapers is presented in order to understand the basic information required for the case study.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight discuss and analyse the findings of this research. **Chapter Six** criticises the five rationales of launching an online newspaper in depth: technological flow, competition in the media industry, reaching the Lebanese diaspora, the Arab revolt and the use of social media, and finally, the issue of economics. This leads to the analyses of the development of *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

Chapter Seven discusses the newsroom communication routines and production processes of the three Lebanese online newspapers. This chapter also addresses the deadline, beat system, source of news and hiring criteria in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*, and a comparison is made between the production processes of a print newspaper and that of an online version.

Chapter Eight discusses the use of interactive features in the studied newspapers. It starts by analysing how the word ‘interactivity’ is a ‘buzzword’ to the Lebanese editors-in-chief. In order to better understand the concept of ‘interactivity’, this chapter explains its types and applicability in the Lebanese online newspapers. A presentation and analysis is also made on the use of two interactive features: commenting on news and multimedia (pictures and videos) in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

In summary, the outcomes of chapters Six, Seven and Eight will provide the data for the rationale and development of online newspapers, their communication routines and production processes, and finally, their use of interactive features. The three chapters will offer a discussion regarding the study outcomes, by attempting to answer the four research questions: (i) why have newspapers in Lebanon launched an online version?; (ii) how are the three Lebanese online newspapers under study adapting to the new media technologies?; (iii) what are the implications of the adoption of these new technologies on work routine, production process and employment criteria?; and (iv) to what extent did the studied electronic newspapers in Lebanon use the interactive elements, particularly news commentaries and multimedia features?

Finally, **Chapter Nine** discusses online newspapers and the major changes that they have encountered mainly in their interactive features, content, design and journalists. It also analyses the research versus the theoretical framework, the limitations of this research, and any suggestions for further research concerning print and online newspapers, at both a local and a global level.

Chapter Two: Research Background and Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

As the rate of technological change continues, the media perhaps more than any other industry, have been significantly affected by the Internet: no other professional practice has been as 'completely reshaped' as has journalism, in response to the evolution of the Internet (Trench, 1997). Racing to keep up with technological changes, newspapers are experimenting with many new methods of news delivery, and are anxiously trying to keep pace with newer players competing for their share of this young market. The presence of new media and the Internet in particular, has posed a challenge to conventional media, especially the printed newspaper (Domingo and Heinonen, 2008). The popularisation of online news has left traditional media outlets scrambling to find a way to reform their business model and to adapt in the age of the Internet (Green, 2011).

As the Internet broadened its reach in the mid-1990s, many experts discussed how the online medium would change the fourth estate into a two-way, super-highway of multimedia, interactivity and communication. Newspapers of tomorrow would:

likely be a converged, seamless mix of text, audio and video that combine the advantages of the traditional newspaper's important power to time-shift information to suit readers' needs and desires and provide context for events[...] (Kimber, 1997, p. 596).

Due to the adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies, online newspapers were able to use the unlimited space offered by the Internet to give stories more detail and depth, and to connect more background information, different sources and outside links to news stories, and finally, to enrich news by using audio and video technology; the old culture of a newspaper that presents news once every day is no longer tenable. With the birth of the Internet, it is now possible for journalists to offer immediate, timely and sudden scoops of news stories, around the clock; furthermore, Internet users today, are able to experience a considerable range of choices of news delivery, that enables them to customise their news

preferences in order to meet their personal tastes and interests; moreover, the Internet offers all these services 24 hours a day, and free of charge, in most cases.

These interactive expectations were driven by critics who called on online newspapers to develop an entirely different product from their standard print editions. For a variety of reasons, primarily economics, many newspaper publishers had ‘opted simply to put the content of the “paper” product online, only to discover that the online world has its own, often mysterious ethos’ (Lapham, 1995, p. 2). As newspapers and websites moved beyond the ‘honeymoon stage’, the publishers were aware that they would not succeed if they simply re-created printed content, online. They needed to turn to new core issues, such as management, organisational structure, production procedures, and business models.

This chapter aims to outline and survey the relevant past scholarship on online newspapers, as well as on innovation practices. The literature and analytical perspectives applied to this thesis mainly refer to Internet technology as a new medium for newspapers. In order to understand online newspapers and their adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies, this chapter presents the key literature of the study in five sections: news in the Internet age, newspapers and social media, definition of online newspapers, evolution of online newspapers, and finally, benefits and limitations of online newspapers.

2.2. News in the Internet Age

As this thesis concentrates on the study of adoption and adaption of Lebanese online newspapers to new technologies, it is important to comprehend the relationship between newspapers and the birth of the Internet as a new technology. With the launch of each new media tool, great potential for the domination of a promising era of mass communication was anticipated; however, as Li points out:

not as many great expectations were placed on online newspapers, compared to other new media derived from technological innovations. Yet, in less than six years, the online newspapers not only survived but also expanded exponentially. As a matter of fact, the online newspapers were a phenomenon along with the growth of the Internet (2006, p. 1).

The Internet was mainly designed in September 1969 for academic, scientific and military purposes. Its aim was to exchange emails and research data (Leiner et al., 1997, pp. 102-103; Selvin, 2000, p. 28; Castells 2001, p.10). It was not until the late 1990s however, that the Internet began to take shape as the 'World Wide Web' (www), as it is commonly known. No one predicted that this communication system would one day be a source of news; a communication tool that allows millions of people to connect with each other every second of the day; a way to bank, invest, and shop; and an educational and entertainment medium that permits people to watch the latest films, download music, and play games. The World Wide Web allows people to search for information, publish articles and interact with others; nowadays it is deeply ingrained in the culture and everyday lives of many people. Jim Clark, founder of Silicon Graphics and Netscape, voiced the wonder of this modern technology:

the Internet is the de facto standard communications network. We think of it today as a data communications network, but voice is data, video is data, images are data, texts are data - all of these things are just data - and so the Internet is going to be the superhighway that we all have been looking for (Santa Clara Valley Historical Association, 2010).

The word Internet has been tied-up with the term 'new media':

The term "new media" suggests that the Internet is somehow a sudden invention, governed solely by conditions internal to its own technological development. Like all modern communication technology, the Internet is closely interwoven with the wider development of mediated communication. This process has gone hand-in-hand with the expansion of economic organisations and with the development of the modern nation-state (Selvin, 2000, p. 11).

The term 'new media' however, is sometimes misleading, since it gives an implicit assumption of a fixed 'old', when media is constantly and temporally changing; consequently, as a result of the adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies such as the Internet, there is always some 'newness' in media.

There is little doubt that the Internet is an unprecedented gateway to a vast wealth of knowledge and information that has its effect on the production and distribution of news. In the late 20th century, Internet technology opened up new possibilities for the delivery of news by newspapers (Gunter, 2003, p. 1). With this new invention, paper products for the newspapers and magazines, the ink, the printing

houses, the delivery trucks and the newspaper 'delivery boys' were all replaced digitally, in order to create what is, commonly called today, the online or electronic newspaper.

According to Chris Lapham (1995, p. 7), at the end of the 20th century, two powerful forces emerged to change the mass communication model: the use of computers and the constantly accelerating capacity of new technology to enhance communication. He adds that because this change in the model is occurring so rapidly, some are calling it a 'technological' or 'information revolution'. Lapham also says that a natural step is being experienced in the evolutionary progress of communication, ranging from oral and literal to computers. In the period between 2000 and 2009, the Internet shifted from being an 'emerging communications technology' to becoming a mature and widespread mass medium (Lucena, 2011, p. 53).

Aleesha Patel (2010) believes that the Internet had a direct and an indirect impact on all mass media, particularly newspapers. She wrote:

[...] directly, the Internet has increased competition for the newspaper and revised the way news is distributed. Indirectly, the Internet has influenced advertising trends, consumer behaviour and the rise of disruptive technologies (p. 12).

Bill Gates (1996) mentions in his book, *The Road Ahead*, that Internet technology has four benefits on newspaper industries: the low outlay involved in online newspaper production allows the publishers to save on the costs of printing, such as paper and ink; the ability to reach more users through the Internet network greatly benefits newspaper publishers; this new media provides a high quality of messages with more obvious and accurate reception, consequently, digital data offer a better quality of picture and sound than analogue data; and finally, the capacity of the Internet network, linked through fibre optics, satellites, telephone lines and mobile phone waves, perceptions on the limitations in terms of timing and location become less significant.

In the early 1990s, after some initial scepticism and even disdain, news organisations around the developed world, quickly saw the new medium of online

newspapers as the future. Newspaper publishers were aware of using the World Wide Web as a new channel to deliver their publications to a broader audience. At the same time, because of the potential of the World Wide Web and the Internet network, the transformation of text, still and animated photographs, graphics, film, video, and sound are all possible. James Selvin (2000) argues in his book, *The Internet and Society*, that the Internet has the potential to enable individuals and organisations to interact with distant others on an unprecedented scale, creating new modes of exercising power and new modes of underwriting the legitimate use of that power. When individuals publish information on the World Wide Web or send or receive an email, they enter into forms of interaction which differ from face-to-face verbal contact and from conventional forms of mediated communication (Selvin, 2000, p.7).

As early as in 1993, newspaper executives started to assess the consequences of the Internet; some viewed its diffusion as a threat to their industry, while others primarily saw the opportunities associated with this new technology. Addressing this mixed picture, the Newspaper Society, formed a steering group that was granted considerable research funding from a levy on members. While the resulting reports indeed highlighted threats, they also forecast significant opportunities for the newspaper industry. In particular, the expertise and trusted brands of newspapers, typically built over decades, were seen as advantages over other media going online (Beamish, 1998). In Australia, Quinn (2000) reported that within only a few years, the online world turned from ‘an oddity’ to something ‘sexy and modern’. In Europe:

the first year (1994) was curiosity-driven [...]. The year after that a certain amount of fear settled in [...] and 1996 saw the first really expert crowd at ‘interactive publishing’, with everybody having set up an online publishing site and talking page views (Specker, 1999).

In the United States, by 1996:

the trickle ...[had]... grown into a stream, the stream ...[had]... swollen into a river, and nobody ...[knew]... when the flood of newspapers into computerized information services ...[would]... peak’ (Boczkowski, 2004, p. 21).

According to Levins (1997d), the number of online newspapers 'more than doubled' during 1996; by July 1999, only two of the 100 largest dailies did not

have an online presence (Dotinga, 1999). Site traffic also grew substantially, more than doubling every year from 1995 to 1998. A study conducted by the Internet Usage *Auditing Films IPRO* and *Media Matrix* concluded that ‘traffic to established media web sites increased by 130% in 1997’ (*Astonishing Growth*, 1998, p.34); moreover, the staff of online papers also grew: from virtually zero in 1993, there were 3,112 online newspapers, 3,900 online magazines, 2,108 radio sites and 1,823 TV sites in 1998, and a total of 13,536 news sites of all kinds in 2002 (Nguyen et al., 2005). According to the ‘Tech Made Easy’ website⁹, the total number of websites in existence is very difficult to count as thousands are created every day, while others are closed down. Since the Internet was invented, the number of news websites has generally been on the rise; as of October 2012, there were approximately 620.5 million websites on the World Wide Web (Matt, 2011).

The print publishing businesses around the world, including those in the Middle East, have realised the potential of the Internet, not only as a source of information, but also as a powerful tool to change political practices. With the uprising of the Arab revolts in 2011, the Internet has facilitated the emergence of decentralised and leaderless political structures; moreover, the adoption of the Internet by many Middle Eastern countries, has raised the issue of whether the Internet is a useful communication device or a weapon used by Arab governments to censor, ban and control resources and technology. Bart Barendregt of Leiden University, who has studied South-East Asia’s growing digital culture, believes that ‘Muslim youngsters are adopting technology to distance themselves from older, traditional practices while also challenging Western models’ (*The Economist*, 2012); as for Lebanese newspapers, the Internet provided great potential as an operation system - they were among the first Arab newspapers to adopt an online version for many reasons such as to ‘catch up’ with the new global technology, to compete with other news media, to reach the Lebanese diaspora and to follow the new media trend; however, although Lebanese newspapers were fast

⁹ <http://www.techmadeeasy.co.uk/2014/01/18/many-websites-january-2014/> [retrieved 3 October 2014]

in adopting online copies, they were much slower in adapting to new technologies, as will be discussed later in this research.

2.3. Newspapers and Social Media

Although social media is not the main focus of this research, a discussion of online newspapers should be made with reference to social media. Similar to online newspapers, social networking sites are interactive, encourage interconnectivity among people and facilitate the sharing of pictures, sound and videos among peers.

McQuail (2010) defines this phenomenon as:

Social networking sites often known as ‘social media’ comprise of a number of Internet websites that have been set up to enable and encourage users to create networks of acquaintances and also to share messages and audio-visual material, often available to a wider public. The current examples of internationally very popular social media are Facebook, Myspace and YouTube. They have become valuable commercial properties, especially for related advertising, cross-media publicity and generating content from users (cited in Okunna and Omenugha, 2012, p.161).

According to Ijeoma et al., (2013, p. 79), the first social networking site called ‘*Six Degree*’ was launched in 1997. It was based on the idea that ‘everybody is linked with everybody else’ and was referred to as a ‘small world problem’. In 2004, *Facebook* was established and was closely followed by other networking sites¹⁰. The number of these sites has been on the increase, as various new forms are invented.

The explosion of social network, together with the advancement of technology and the invention of smart phones, has made a global impact on mass media; moreover, the popularity of social networks such as *Myspace*, *Facebook*, and *Twitter* have not only created attractive sources for advertising but also for news consumption (Chui, M., et al., 2012). The powers the social media wield have also given traditional media an opportunity to establish a presence on those networking sites. Social media users are able to find most traditional media on *Facebook* and

¹⁰ Boyd, D. and Ellison, N., 2008, ‘Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship’, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 (1), pp. 210-230.

Twitter and can engage with them by ‘liking’ the *Facebook* page or following other users on *Twitter*.

The presence of social media in online newspapers has been studied by a number of researchers (Andersen et al., 2009; Nigam Mayuri, 2008; Erdelez and Rioux, 2000; Sanchez-Gonzalez and Alonso, 2012). Belam (2007) reviewed eight British newspaper websites (*Daily Express*, *Daily Mirror*, *Daily Mail*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *The Sun*, *The Telegraph*, and *The Times*) in depth to identify where and how they use social media. The study found that most of the news websites had adopted such technologies. In his research entitled ‘Is Twitter a useful tool for journalists?’, Nobil (2010, pp.145-155) studied the *Guardian*’s coverage of the G20 protests during the London summit and other activities in 2009. He came to the conclusion that ‘Twitter is a useful marketing and research tool for newspaper websites - one that complements the traditional role of journalist as investigators and producers of timely news’. Most of the studies found that while some online newspapers have embellished their online presence with a variety of interactive features, others are playing the role of cautious traditionalists, adopting a mostly conservative stance towards social media (Larsson, 2012).

There are different ways for online newspapers to use social media technologies. Some newspapers show spontaneous growth in adopting new technologies, including use of discussion forums, links to related information, video, audio, electronic mail, search engines, consumer services, sign-up for personal delivery, and instantaneous updates (a further elaboration of selected new technologies will be made in Chapter Eight). Many news organisations and community newspapers are rapidly adopting a variety of new approaches, however, like social media (*RSS*, *Twitter*, *Facebook* and text alerts) only as supplementary media channels in order to reach new audiences, drive traffic to their own sites, and extract information about their consumers (Greer and Yan, 2010). On the other hand, a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (2012) shows that 33% of Americans obtained their news from social networks, while only 13% read a print newspaper. The survey also shows that 25% of all Americans had downloaded news applications in 2011, up from 16% in 2010 (Sonderman, 2012). A Global Web

Index Study revealed monthly active users on social media had surpassed 1.1 billion in the first quarter of 2013, for the first time. Similarly, *Twitter* is now the fastest growing social platform in the world, with a 44% growth from June 2012 to March 2013 (Davalos, 2013); according to research from sources including *The Washington Post*, *Pew Research Center* and *Reuters*, social media is a serious contender with print newspapers as a primary news source. The research shows that 50% of Americans have learned about breaking news via social media and 46% of people find their news online at least three times a week. Jackie Davalos states, as of 2012, online news revenue has surpassed print newspaper revenue (2013).

Most of the studies conducted on social media in the Middle East, however, focused on its use rather than on its presence and role in online newspapers. According to a Ph.D. dissertation conducted by Mohamad Aljami (2011) on the adoption of Web 2.0 technologies in Kuwait, newspapers in Kuwait are perceived as the first sector to adopt social media applications on their websites. A recent study (conducted in late 2012 and early 2013) by North-Western University in Qatar commissioned a survey among people in eight Arab countries: Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain, Qatar, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the UAE. The aim of the study was to investigate how people in the Arab world access news and information, rate the credibility of information sources, and use social media. In general, the study found that more than 90% of Internet users in all Middle Eastern countries use social networking sites, with the exception of Qatar and Egypt, at 74% and 86%, respectively. As for Lebanon, 89% of the Lebanese think that the television is an important source for news and current events, followed by 69% for the Internet, and 57% for newspapers. Moreover, 60% of Lebanese use the Internet to visit social networking or video sharing websites; in a typical day, the Lebanese spend three hours using social networking sites, more precisely, 93% follow *Facebook* and 41% use *Twitter* (<http://menamediasurvey.northwestern.edu/#>).

It is evident from the survey that the Lebanese consider the Internet an important source for news and current events more than print newspapers. Interestingly, although a large majority of Lebanese make use of social networking sites and are

conversant with *Facebook*, the Lebanese online newspapers are still not aware that ‘the adoption of social media is positively associated with an increase in the size of its audience, advertising revenues and social media networks’ (Hong, 2012, p.69).

It is worth mentioning here that *Facebook* changed its News Feed in 2013 to give users a faster and greater number of updates on their friends’ activities. The News Feed acts like a personal newspaper by showing the most interesting stories at the top, based on user preferences.

In conclusion, with the ever growing interactive features associated with the birth of social media, users’ thirst for up-to-date information is ever-growing and the new innovative technologies are preying on the online newspapers. Although many newspaper readers in the Middle East are now using alternate media such as social media, the Lebanese online newspapers have still to fully adopt and adapt to this and other interactive media discussed in Chapter Eight.

2.4. Definition of Online Newspapers

There is no doubt that newspapers are nowadays fighting against the decrease in circulation and increase in newsprint costs, in addition to the demand of corporate owners for wider profit margins; therefore, editors, publishers, reporters and technicians have worked over the past few years to devise new, paperless ways to deliver the news (Gunter, 2003, p. 18). The different ways have been variously described as ‘online newspapers’, ‘electronic journalism’, ‘digital media’ or ‘electronic publishing’. According to Negroponte (1995), the electronic newspaper is a common but essential step in the approach to the supreme goal of interactive media. In general, an electronic publication is ‘a publication which requires the user to employ an electronic device at some stage for its reception and/or its reading’ (Vickers & Martyn, 1994, p.4). There is little or no evidence that anyone gave serious attention to the new term, ‘electronic publishing’, when it first appeared in the mid- 1970s; however, by the early 1980s, it started to gather more prominence as a topic of discussion and enquiry. This change of emphasis occurred as some press organisations began to look at it as a vital tool for their operations and activities. It

was also considered as part of a drive to establish upgraded computer software to facilitate their daily work (Gunter, 2003, p. 18).

In an article published in the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram*, Dr. Mahmoud Alam Il-Deen (1998) considered that online newspapers as those that are produced and published on the Internet. They take the form of print newspapers with pictures, videos, audio, graphs and advertisements accessed on a computer screen. Dr. Saeed Al-Grayeb defined online newspapers as:

... those news [*sic*] which are issued on the international Internet network either as an identical version for a printed newspaper or as an online version that lacks a printed copy. These online newspapers could deal with general news or sometimes with only specialized topics such as sports online newspapers. They are called online newspapers since their news are [*sic*] updated on a daily basis, or every few minutes depending on the newspaper's interaction and resources (2001, p.213).

Dr. Husni Nasr (2003) described electronic journalism as paperless newspapers that are issued on the Internet. Readers are able to read the news on their computers or laptops and surf additional links related to the topics which they are reading. Finally, not only can the articles be saved on readers' computers as an electronic archive, they can also be printed out on paper (p.13).

It can be said, therefore, that online newspapers are the electronic versions of print newspapers, either as a born-on-the-web (stand-alone or web only) publication or as the online version of printed periodicals. According to Boczkowski (2004, p.51), born-on-the-web newspapers are those dailies that do not have any hard copy connections: they create original content by taking advantage of the unique capabilities of the web. This practice of 'recreating' or using the 'web-only' method, included constant updates on breaking stories during the day, special multimedia packages of major events, new sections developed exclusively for their websites, and user-authored content; on the other hand, online newspapers that have descended from print parents, recombine information by taking print content and increasing its usefulness on their websites through the addition of technical functionality or related content from other websites, or both. Boczkowski (2004, p.51), described this category as 'Recombination of practices'. It included personalised or customised editions on news sites pulling together vast amounts of

news and database information on a particular topic; they also link similar content from many online newspapers in addition to archives of past editions.

Based on Boczkowski (2004, p.64) and Ajko (2006), the table below summarises the definition of an online newspaper that descends from a print version.

A Print Newspaper	An Online Newspaper
is largely a generalised product	can easily be customised to every consumer's preferences
has spatial limitations	has unlimited content space
whose distribution costs are usually confined to a single place	has become simultaneously both micro-local and global
often only lasts 24 hours	can extend its duration by having past editions as readily available as the latest ones, turning into a permanently available digital library
is produced in mostly fixed cycles	has been made more complex by featuring constant updates
communicates information only through texts and still images	has now become part of multimedia, triggering the possibility of major transformations in the story-telling conventions of news reporting
provides information dominated by one-to-many linear flow	has exploded to include various forms of user-authored content
targets only a printed edition consumer	has been turned into a co-production (users and journalists) and altered the role of journalists as the single source of information
is used to buy and sell local products as a financial operation	has become a vast merchandising and distributive tool for local and international products and often at competitive prices

Table 2.1: Definition of an Online Newspaper that descends from a Print Newspaper

At first, online newspapers repurposed their content by utilising almost identical material originally developed for their print editions, known as ‘repurposing’ or ‘shovelware’ according to Boczkowski (2004, p. 55). Ali Ajko (2006, p. 43) referred to it as a ‘replica’ copy of an online newspaper that offers the same content as the newspaper print but in a format that can be read on a computer screen. Ward (2002, p.125) believes that ‘shovelware’ might not always be a ‘bad thing’, particularly for those who want to read an exact copy of the print edition of a newspaper which they cannot otherwise access, for example, for geographical

reasons. According to Joseph Dominick (2009, p.91), the replica edition has some advantages and disadvantages. Consumers reading the print edition can judge the importance of a story by the size of the headlines and photographs and the placements of articles; these clues are typically absent in the replica version: these editions may not be updated as often as those online, resulting in some news stories that might be stale. Finally, there is considerable clicking and scrolling involved in reading a replica, which some users might find annoying and time-consuming (Dominick, 2009, p.91) on the other hand, replica editions are cheap to produce. The conversion to the digital production of a print newspaper means that virtual pages are already to be found on computer screens, thus, they can be assembled into replica editions with little added effort; furthermore, replica editions can carry links to advertisers' websites and are easily archived.

In summary, the replica edition offers a selection of editorial content that is shovelled from a linked parent medium. These sites also contain a minimal, often moderated form of participatory communication (Schultz, 1999; Jankowski & Van Selm, 2000; Kenney, Gorelik & Mwangi, 2000). This type of news site does not differ from journalism in its approach to journalistic story-telling, news values, and relationships with audiences, as it is practiced in print or broadcasting media (Deuze, 2001).

This research focuses on two Lebanese replica or shovelware online newspapers, *Aldiyar* and *Annahar*, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*; regardless of whether they are replica copies or born-on-the-web editions, online newspapers encountered many changes as discussed in the following section.

2.5. The Evolution of Online Newspapers

2.5.1. Change in Technology

During the last decade, the media landscape has witnessed major technological changes with the introduction and growth of the online newspapers and mobile services. The newspaper companies initially paid attention to the 'cannibalization effect' which is the possible negative impact that the launch of the online

newspaper would have on the amount of subscribers to the print edition (Chyi and Lasorsa, 2002), but, at the same time, there was a growing conviction that:

...newspapers need an online presence to explore cheaper production and distribution methods; to reverse circulation declines by building a new base of young and computer-savvy readers; to develop new advertising revenue potential; and to protect their advertising base (Kamerer and Bressers, 1998, p. 2).

An online newspaper is created by the convergence of the newspaper and the Internet. Chyi and Sylvie (2002) describe it as:

technologically, the Internet enables online newspapers to seek a world-wide market. Practically, most online newspapers are owned by their print counterparts, which also serve as online editions' primary content providers (p. 232).

According to Boczkowski (2004) the emergence of online newspapers has occurred:

partly as a reaction to major socioeconomic and technological trends, such as changing competitive scenario and developments in computers and telecommunications trends that, in turn, have influenced online newspapers (p.4).

The quick shift from print to online newspapers, interprets the role of technological change in the adoption of new innovations in online journalism. According to Pavlik (2000, p.229) 'journalism has always been shaped by technology', but the emerging consensus is to reject deterministic explanations and instead, propose that technological innovations are mediated and shaped by initial conditions and contextual characteristics (Boczkowski, 2004c; Conboy and Steel, 2008; Haas, 2005; He and Zhu, 2002; Sousa, 2006; Stober, 2004; Ursell, 2001). Thus, in an analysis of how journalism has changed in a digital environment, Deuze (2007), proposes that:

technology is not an independent factor influencing journalistic work from outside, but must be seen in terms of implementation, and how it extends and amplifies previous ways of doing things (p.153).

2.5.2. Change in Design, Content and Journalists

The first fully web-based newspaper in America, *The Palo Alto Weekly*, appeared in 1994 (Carlson, 2003). Eighteen months later, most American newspapers had

their own news websites (Hall, 2001). This short period involved a set of new challenges for the print newspapers with regard to the design of their online versions, organisational factors on the publishers' side, and changes in audience demographics and preferences (McAdams, 1995). Describing her own work at the *Washington Post*, McAdams (1995) portrayed the design challenge as taking

...a lot of large pages that are covered with printed text arranged almost haphazardly and that are worthless twenty-four hours after they appear and translate them into a medium where their contents will have value indefinitely, be part of a much larger collection of data, be read on small screen in scrolling format, and be searchable in various ways (p.64).

Creating an online version of a print newspaper required many important design and content decisions, such as the degree of print newspaper resemblance, pros and cons of the newspaper metaphor, and the possible elimination of page one (Ihlström and Lundberg, 2004). In view of such design issues, McAdams (1995) concluded that an online newspaper cannot be a strict translation or a replica copy of the print product; indeed, the new media required new skills, therefore, during the late 1990s, online newspaper staff considerably increased. McAdams (1995) noted that:

we have learned that to produce an appealing online newspaper, an organization needs good, experienced journalists and good, experienced online people and some people who are both, and all of them need to consult closely and frequently (p. 85).

There have been many arguments that online newspapers have added to the pressure on journalists to carry out multiple tasks and combine news-gathering and story-telling techniques in different media formats. This pressure blends long-standing work flows with novel demands, and expresses what Bromley (1997) calls 'multiskilling'. Deuze (2004, p.144) argues that news producers are concerned because they are expected to carry out additional tasks for 'the same salary as before'. These work flow changes are tied to what Boczkowski calls the 'de-reification of media options':

Rather than taking the medium for granted, the web's multimedia potential moves media selection processes one step earlier by requiring journalists to choose what medium or media to use for a particular story'' (Boczkowski, 2004a, p.123).

2.5.3. Change in Speed of Communication

Another issue regarding online news production is the increase in the speed of communication in journalistic work. Many scholars propose that online journalism has contributed to the collapse of the twice-a-day news cycle (Boczkowski, 2009; García, 2008; Lawson-Borders, 2006; Williams and Delli Carpini, 2000), leading to the ascendance of ‘high-speed news’ (Pavlik, 2000, p. 232). An examination of the period of data collection of various studies that address the acceleration of news work, suggests that it has deepened over time (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009, p. 570). Despite the fast growth of online newspapers, few studies have researched their changing roles. Some studies of new media have focused primarily on the effect of new technology on the dominance of existing media: because online newspapers have emerged at such a fast pace, their examination has fallen behind, and studies have focused primarily on newspapers available on commercial online services.

Boczkowski (2004a) conducted ethnographic research on the *New York Times* on the Web in 1998, and reported that editors in its technology section, published stories daily towards the end of the day, following the publishing cycle of the printed *Times*. A few years later, Klinenberg (2005) examined news production at a large metropolitan daily in the USA, and argued that temporal patterns had accelerated so drastically that they amounted to a ‘news cyclone’; on the other hand, Quandt (2008) conducted ethnographic work on five German news sites. He concluded that the move towards frequent updating leads to ‘[news] agency dependent and “second-hand” journalism’ (2008b, p. 89) due to the lack of time for research, cross-checking, and original writing; thus, online news producers seem to have adopted one of the practices that online media make possible - constantly publishing new information – which, in turn, has led to changes in their traditional way of producing news (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009, p. 570).

2.5.4. Change in Newsroom Routine

Several scholars (Endres, 1998; Huxford and Duda 2000; Martin and Hanson 1998) emphasised the centrality of the relationship between print and online

newsrooms and the complex character of this relationship: Huxford and Duda argued that a 'clash of cultures' between the two newsrooms has hindered the creation of original online content; however, their study did not analyse how this relationship affected adoption of multimedia and interactivity technologies during the creation of original content (p. 2).

Several researches conducted content analyses on online newspapers (Tankard and Ban, 1998; Kamerer and Bressers, 1998; Schultz, 1999; Kenney et al., 2000). Other studies focused on organisational integration among print, broadcast, and online operations, which are usually categorised under the name of 'convergence' or 'multimedia' (Dennis, 2006; Deuze, 2007; Dupagne and Garrison, 2006; Quinn, 2005).

Lawson-Borders (2006) describes convergence as:

the realm of possibilities when cooperation occurs between print and broadcast media for the delivery of multimedia content through the use of computers and the Internet (p.4).

On the other hand, Gilbert (2005) looked into online ventures of newspaper print organisations and proposed that a strong perception of an outside threat from newcomers in the media industry helped incumbent media companies change their investment patterns:

...but, at the same time, and in yet another expression of how tradition shaped change, they failed to modify organizational processes that could have taken advantage of those resource investments in an innovative way (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009, p. 567).

Some studies have also found that established journalistic operations, such as online newspapers, have tended to overlook the potential of new technologies, thus affecting limited change across the industry (Boczkowski, 2004a; Cohen, 2002; Deuze, 2003; García, 2008; Garrison, 2005; Quandt, 2008a; Quinn, 2005); Domingo (2008a, p.698) for example, an ethnographic study conducted on four Spanish online newsrooms, noted that although online media made the participation of users possible, the fact that interactivity was counter-intuitive with the principles of traditional journalistic culture, tended to diminish the willingness to explore audience participation.

2.5.5. Change in Newspaper Characteristics

According to Dr. May Al-Abdallah (2005, p. 219), there are two characteristics of electronic media: 'diversity' in publishing the news regarding the unlimited space and capacity, 'flexibility' in the news content (Sakr, 1999, p.68; Shareem, 2000, p.27; Mouzafar, 1999, p.89). Dr. Abdil Wajid Rida (2007, pp.105-108) lists an additional five characteristic of online newspapers that differ from a print copy.

Online newspapers use the interactivity technique which includes additional links to the news such as photos, people's biographies, background information, previous opinions, and other related topics, and so on. According to Guay (1995), interactivity is divided into five groups: (i) direct interaction through chat rooms created on the news websites or through the messenger service, where editors-in-chief communicate directly with journalists and reporters; (ii) indirect interaction through electronic mail (email), statistics, forums, and email lists of subscribers provided; (iii) navigational interaction through 'Next Page' and 'Back to Top' buttons or scrolling menu bars; (iv) functional interaction through direct 'mailto:' links, Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) and moderated discussion lists; and finally, adaptive interaction through 'smart web design' and personal customisation.

Second, online newspapers are not limited to a specific area, unlike in a print newspaper where journalists are asked to summarise or delete parts of their articles due to lack of space, therefore, they provide more depth in offering particular information on a certain topic or event; this includes surfing related topics mentioned in, or at the end of, the online news article, and searching the newspaper records, especially as some newspapers allow their readers free access to their archives, and finally, checking the special editions of the newspaper for additional data, such as the Sunday or international editions.

Third, one of the main characteristics of an online newspaper is 'multimedia'. It is the presentation of a news story package on a website using two or more media formats, such as (but not limited to) the spoken and written word, music, moving and still images, graphic animations, including interactive and hyper-textual elements (Deuze, 2003).

Fourth, one way to organise an online newspaper is the ease with which readers can gain access: paid by registration or free of charge (Dominick, 2009, p.97). One of the earliest business models was the pay-for-access model, allowing consumers to read online editions for a fee. This approach has worked for a small number of papers, including the *Wall Street Journal*. Another arrangement for accessing an online newspaper is the registration model. The readers have to provide some personal information to gain access to the full site; publishers then sell this information to advertisers; in addition, salespeople for the online sites could use this data to show potential advertisers that they were reaching their target audiences by purchasing advertisements on the online newspaper's site. Results from the registration model have been mixed. There are websites that provide user names and passwords to get past the registration screen. As of 2006, only 23 of the top US newspapers required registration (Dominick, 2009, p.98). It is difficult, however, to know how accurate the registration data provided by readers are, or how many people are scared off by the registration process; nonetheless, some newspapers have more than a million registered users. Free access is the most common model that allows readers to access the online newspaper without any subscription or registration. These sites support themselves by selling advertising or merchandise, or by starting social networking sites (Dominick, 2009, p.98).

Finally, readers of online newspapers have 24 hours per day access to the news website; however, print newspaper readers have to wait another whole day to buy the next edition of the newspaper; therefore, online newspapers are published in real time, while print newspapers take longer to reach readers through the distribution process to the news shops, libraries, companies or homes. According to Richard Wurff and Edmund Lauf (2005, p.19), 'online newspapers are well positioned in real-time or continuously updated news. They present the latest breaking news'. For users, frequent updates of information are seen as one of the potential strong points of online news: they contribute to content interactivity, in the sense that they provide information immediately as it becomes available; not only that, it also gives users more choices in selecting the news that they want to read, at their convenience.

To sum up, unique characteristics of online newspapers created a new trend in journalism; although these were initially eccentric to most editors, they were very aware that if they did not ‘catch the wave’ they would never be able to guarantee a sustainable future. An American newspaper executive once said, after returning from a conference on new media in 1995:

With virtually everything about this new game uncertain [...] there may be only one immutable rule: If you want to be sure you can play later, you must play now. No communications company can afford to sit out and hope to catch up (quoted in Boczkowski, 2004, p. 38).

The characteristics of publishing online created more opportunities for newspapers: for instance, it allowed them to compete more effectively with broadcast journalism by presenting breaking news online in a timelier manner than printing allows. This has changed the division that has marked the news business for the past several decades of television, which gave a warning of breaking news, and print, which explained what it meant. Online newspapers have built a broad portfolio around the core product, the traditional newspaper, in order to connect with both general and targeted audiences. By adopting and adapting to new technologies, print newspapers have been critically transformed from newspaper companies to information organisations.

In the case of Lebanon, the emergence of online newspapers in 1996 has barely been investigated by Lebanese media scholars. There are a number of researches on the use and effect of the Internet in the Middle East, but none of them focuses on the birth of online newspapers and the adoption and adaption to new technologies. According to Mohammad Al-Jasim’s (2006) article entitled *‘The Influence of Electronic Media in the Development of the Arab Socio-Politics’*, he states that it is very hard to identify the influence and role of electronic media in the Middle East because there has been no concerted or systematic investigation. He adds that ‘most of the documented information found, are [*sic*] related to the use of the Internet as a mean[s] to transfer information and not as an [*sic*] electronic journalism or media’ (Al-Jasim, 2006, p.179).

Much of the research conducted in Arabic investigated the topic of the Internet in the Middle East with only a slight reference to online newspapers; in addition, the

majority of the media research was conducted by Egyptian scholars and media analysts on more or less online Egyptian newspapers; as a result, the bulk of the research about online newspapers in Lebanon until the date of this research (2014) is mostly performed by NGOs and media companies for marketing purposes, or as a part of annual reports about the media in Lebanon (Melki et al., 2012; Dabbous-Sensenig 2007; Dajani, 1971, 1992, 2001, 2013); moreover, none of the academic research on the topic of online newspapers in Lebanon focused on the Diffusion of Innovation theory, therefore, this study presents new insight into online newspapers in Lebanon, and their adoption and adaption to new technologies. In the following section of this chapter, an analysis of the benefits and limitations of online newspapers will be discussed.

2.6. The Benefits and Limitations of Online Newspapers

Online newspapers have various benefits for the newspaper industry as well as for readers. Two of the major advantages for the newspaper industry is the solution to the newspaper delivery problem (Moghdam, 1978, p. iii) and the reduction of printing production costs (Wollert, 1985); for newspaper readers the benefits from this new technology are also positive; for example, the Internet network offers the chance to read the online edition before the print edition, and also an opportunity to read newspapers from any country in the world; furthermore, news and information about breaking stories or any other event can be updated in a matter of minutes: a great advantage that the online media have over the print media (Ajami, 2009).

According to McAdams (1994) an online newspaper does not have any significant limitations on space which allows more local coverage - an online editor will not be particularly concerned about the slogan: 'all the news that fits, we print' (pp. 30-34). Another advantage is that readers will be able to search the archives of the online newspaper to find related articles that may provide a background for today's story. McAdams (1994) also finds that online newspapers offer additional functionalities, such as the electronic-mail addresses of editors and reporters and links to other sources of information, including original documents (pp. 30-34).

Baird (1987) suggests that the World Wide Web has an advantage over print newspapers regarding the structure of online newspapers, for example, the Internet is excellent for displaying colourful graphics, while print newspapers have their limitations. Baird found that the remarkable change in American newspaper layout during the last decade had been created by the technological advances in graphic design; with advanced computer technology, an online newspaper can retrieve graphics from databases and update them as required within minutes; on the other hand, the print media remain more trustworthy as a source of information and analysis since professional reporters and analysts have more time to check their facts and dig deeper in pursuit of the truth (Ajami, 2009).

Online newspapers have some limitations in terms of production and receiving; according to Marshall (1983, pp. 2-3), the online newspaper system still has major problems of access, privacy and copyright. The uncontrolled information system has directly affected the ethical and professional responsibility of writing on the website (Wollert, 1985, p.141). Access to electronic newspaper sites involves the purchase of an electronic device (computer, iPad, smart phone, laptop) before readers can retrieve information from a website (Marshall, 1983, p. 2); readers also need the knowledge and skills to use this new technology. In some developing countries, economic problems, technological illiteracy, government censorship and cultural problems limit many people from reading online newspapers. One of the major problems is the uncontrolled system of sending and receiving useless or even dangerous information on the Internet such as viruses. McAdams (1997) argues that one of the limitations that handicaps current hypertext systems is that readers ‘get lost’: Internet users are distracted from the original article by ‘interesting’ links and often cannot find their way back.

2.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature and studies that relate to online newspapers and the particular concept of an online newspaper in terms of its definition, characteristics, benefits and limitations was observed and discussed. The conventions of online newspapers were cited from several sources, including

research articles, textbooks, and websites, to offer a framework for the online newspaper as a new media technology.

Two powerful forces emerged at the end of the 20th century which changed the mass communication model: the use of computers and the constantly accelerating capacity of new technology to enhance communication (Lapham, 1995, p.7); with the launch of the Internet as a new communication tool in the late 1990s, not so many expectations were placed on online newspapers, however, in less than six years, they expanded exponentially (Li, 2006, p.1); thus, the Internet shifted from being an ‘emerging communications technology’ (Lucena, 2011, p.53) to becoming a mature and widespread mass medium. It also enabled individuals and organisations to interact with distant ‘others’, which differs from face-to-face verbal contact and from conventional forms of mediated communication (Selvin, 2000, p. 7). The Lebanese newspapers adopted and adapted an online version in 1996, a few years after some international newspapers appeared online in 1994 (Carlson, 2003); nevertheless, the content and design of the Lebanese online newspapers were not particularly distinct from their print versions.

Some newspaper executives initially viewed the diffusion of the Internet as a threat to their industry, while others saw the opportunities associated with this new technology; in general, there was a growing conviction that ‘newspapers need an online presence to explore cheaper production and distribution methods; to reserve circulation declines by building a new base of young and computer-savvy readers; to develop new advertising revenue potential; and to protect their advertising base’ (Kamerer and Bressers, 1998, p. 2). The Lebanese editors-in-chief therefore adopted an online version in order to ‘catch up’ with the new global technology; to compete with other news media; to reach the Lebanese diaspora, and to follow the new media trend, as this research found. This shows that the rationale behind launching a Lebanese online version was different from that set by other international newspapers; moreover, although Lebanese newspapers were among the first Arab newspapers to adopt an online version, their aim was mainly to ‘seek a world-wide market’ (Chyi and Sylvie, 2002, p. 232) but also to react to ‘major socioeconomic and technological trends, such as changing competitive scenario

and developments in computers and telecommunications trends' (Boczkowski, 2004, p. 4).

This chapter also discussed that creating an online version of a print newspaper required some changes in their design, content and type of journalists employed. McAdams (1995, p. 85) notes that an online newspaper cannot be a strict translation or a replica copy of the print product and concludes by saying that in order to produce an appealing online newspaper, an organisation needs good, experienced journalists and good, experienced online staff. This created an argument that online newspapers added to the pressure on journalists to carry out multiple tasks and combine news-gathering and story-telling techniques in different media formats. Bromley (1997) calls it 'multi-skilling'; Boczkowski (2004a, p. 123) describes it as the 'de-reification of media options'; and Deuze (2004, p. 144) argues that news producers are expected to carry out additional tasks for 'the same salary as before'.

The role of updating the content was up to the journalists working in the print newspapers, when the Lebanese newspapers first launched their online versions in 1996. This was quite possible then, since the online version was a 'replica copy' of the print product (Ajko, 2006, p. 43), or 'shovelware', according to Boczkowski (2004, p. 55); however, with the formation of an online department, the creation of exclusive online news, and the addition of interactive features to the online content in 2012, required the Lebanese online newspapers to hire new, full-time journalists to work in their online departments. They also started offering training sessions for their journalists in order 'to choose what medium or media to use for a particular story' (Boczkowski, 2004a, p.123) and to deal with 'high-speed news' (Pavlik, 2000, p. 232).

The ethnographic observations and interviews conducted in *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* discovered that both Lebanese online newspapers published their stories early in the morning, when the print version was completely finished and on its way to be printed and distributed. This builds on Boczkowski's (2004a) ethnographic research on the *New York Times* on the Web in 1998, which reported

that editors published stories towards the end of the day, following the publishing cycle of the printed *Times*. With the new design and content that *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* adopted in 2012, the move towards frequent updating led to '[news]-agency dependent and "second-hand" journalism' (Quandt, 2008b, p. 89); this caused changes in their traditional way of producing news (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009, p. 570). The ethnographic observations in the newsroom of the three studied samples concluded that there is a strong relationship between print and online newsrooms; however, according to Huxford and Duda (2000), there is a 'clash of cultures' between the two newsrooms which has hindered the creation of original online content. The findings from the content analysis conducted in this research examined the use of interactive features in online newspapers as well as studies conducted by Dennis (2006), Deuze (2007), Dupagne and Garrison (2006) and Quinn (2005), which focused on organisational integration among print, broadcast and online operations, and found that this was usually categorised under 'convergence' or 'multi-media'.

The data collected from the content analysis of three Lebanese online newspapers concluded that 'although online media made the participation of users possible, the fact that interactivity was counter-intuitive with the principles of traditional journalistic culture, tended to diminish the willingness to explore audience participation' (Domingo, 2008a, p. 698). This research also supports the findings of Boczkowski (2004a), Cohen (2002), Deuze (2003), García (2008), Garrison (2005), Quandt (2008a) and Quinn (2005) whose studies found that new technologies effected limited change across the media industry.

The technological changes over the years in the journalism field have ranged from the adoption of computer pagination, to computer-assisted reporting, to digital photography. This research found that technology has had 'an impact on the way the newsroom operates and is becoming a main factor in the news-gathering process' (Schmitz and Higgins, 2009, p. 589); as Li (2006) mentioned, the Internet has brought about a new era for newspapers. The use of social media by online newspapers (although social media is not the main focus of this research), has illustrated how the vast network database that social media sites support,

serves as the perfect place for news to spread across the world, and for interactivity to be practiced. Negroponte (1995) states that the electronic newspaper is a common but essential step in the approach to the supreme goal of interactive media.

Online newspapers have their unique characteristics in addition to interactivity, such as 'diversity in publishing the news regarding the unlimited space and capacity' (Al-Abdallah, 2005 p. 219); 'flexibility in the news content' (Sakr, 1999, p. 68); 'offering additional functionalities, such as the electronic-mail addresses of editors and reporters and links to other sources of information, including original documents' (McAdams, pp. 30-34); 'the presentation of news story in a multimedia format' (Deuze, 2013); 'easy to gain access to news stories' (Dominick, 2009, pp. 97-98); and 'news is positioned in real time or continuously updated' (Wurff and Lauf, 2005, p.19). Most of these characteristics were adapted by the Lebanese online newspapers, which transformed them from newspaper companies to information organisations. The Lebanese website *Elnashra*, as a born-on-the-web newspaper, was a solution to the news delivery problem (Moghdam, 1978, p. iii) and the reduction of printing production costs (Wollert, 1985).

The adoption of an online edition, on the other hand, made the Lebanese newspapers face some major problems such as 'access, privacy and copyright' (Marshall, 1983, pp. 2-3); the 'ethical and professional responsibility of writing on the website' (Wollert, 1985, p.141); the 'purchase of an electronic device (computer, iPad, smart phone, laptop)' (Marshall, 1983, p. 2); the knowledge and skills to use this new technology which not all Lebanese readers had; the technological illiteracy, government censorship and cultural problems that limit many Lebanese people from reading online newspapers; the uncontrolled system of sending and receiving useless or even dangerous information on the Internet such as viruses; and finally, the possibility of readers 'getting lost and distracted from the original article by 'interesting' links and often [could not] find their way back' (McAdams, 1997).

Despite all these limitations, the Lebanese online newspapers adapted to, and adopted, this new technology because they '[could] not afford to sit out and hope to catch up' (quoted in Boczkowski, 2004, p. 38). Najwa Maroun, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyar* asserted: 'if we won't change, our newspaper would be changed' (interview: Maroun, Beirut, 2008).

To sum it up, this research, studied two different kinds of online newspapers: those that descend from print copies (*Aldiyar* and *Annahar*) and a born-on-the-web newspaper (*Elnashra*); therefore, it was necessary to discuss in this chapter the definition and unique characteristics of online newspapers that differentiate them from print copies. The contextual information about the development of communication technologies will help this exploration to understand why and how traditional newspapers launched an online version. The related examination of the definition, characteristics, benefits and limitations of online newspapers have been applied to lead an understanding of online newspapers and their development, in terms of their production processes, communication routines and their use of interactive features. It is hoped that this will answer the research questions and also confirm the argument of the study: although newspapers in Lebanon were the first to adopt an online version, they were late in adapting to this new technology. The information from the literature review has offered a broad understanding of the context and development of online newspapers; and the next chapter will reveal the Diffusion of Innovation theory and its application to the adoption and adaptation of Lebanese online newspapers to new technologies.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

3.1. Introduction

Since the twentieth century, social scientists have looked deeper into the processes and meaning of organisational innovation. The adoption of a new communication technology, such as the Internet, allowed scholars to rethink, rather than abandon, media definitions and theories. It made them ask questions on why one new thing, practice, or idea would be widely adopted, while another would be all but ignored. In the 19th century, Gabriel Tarde (1890, p.140), the French sociologist, raised the following question:

Our problem is to learn why, given one hundred different innovations conceived of at the same time – innovations in the form of words, in mythological ideas, in industrial process, etc. – ten will spread abroad, while ninety will be forgotten.

This research uses the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory as the main conceptual framework to understand how online newspapers in Lebanon adopted and adapted to new technologies in terms of their rationale, production processes and use of interactive features. This chapter will discuss the Diffusion of Innovation theory in six sections: the history and orientation, definitions and characteristics, the adoption and decision processes, qualities to success in innovation, application to research, and finally, the limitations of the theory.

3.2. History and Orientation of Diffusion of Innovation Theory

The original diffusion research was conducted as early as 1903 by the French sociologist, Gabriel Tarde, who plotted the original S-shaped diffusion curve. Tarde's curve is of current importance because 'most innovations have an S-shaped rate of adoption' (Rogers, 1983); the variance lies in the slope of the 'S'. Some new innovations diffuse rapidly, creating a steep S curve; others have a slower rate of adoption, creating a more gradual slope. The rate of adoption or diffusion has become an important area of research for sociologists, and more specifically, for advertisers.

In the 1940s, two sociologists, Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross, published their seminal study of the diffusion of hybrid seed among Iowa farmers. Their study found that adoption was not a quick decision: economic factors, as well as processes of interpersonal and mediated communications formed part of the farmers' knowledge and final decisions on the implementation of hybrid seeds.

Since the Ryan and Gross study, there has been keen interest in the spread of innovation. Media scholars began to merge the studies of acquisition of new technology and the study of influences of mass communication; however, in 1962, Everett Rogers, a professor of rural sociology, published his book entitled *Diffusion of Innovations*, based on synthesised research from over 508 diffusions in various fields. A few years later, Rogers, together with another social scientist, F. Floyd Shoemaker, developed a theory for the adoption of innovations by individuals and organisations, such as the media.

In journalism and Internet studies, DOI has been used to examine the dynamics that occur when an innovation is introduced into a news organisation. The first innovation in online news is:

the development by the online staff of new production practices, new product features or new technological tools, which can include systems, programs or applications that help in the distribution, acquisition, processing, display and storage of the news content (Schmitz and Domingo, 2010, p. 1158).

Technological innovation in particular has often been a key aspect in the adaptation of journalism to new social and market trends, although it was seldom the focus of research until the advent of online journalism (Cottle and Ashton, 1999). The exploration of the evolution of this innovation within newsrooms goes back to the studies on the introduction of the telephone and printing (Nguyen, 2007). Over the past sixty years, media scholars have examined print newsrooms and their technologies, including the flow of information with technologies (Garrison, 2001; Herbert, 1998; Gunter, 2003). They also investigated the use of databases in newsrooms (Garrison, 2001; Schmitz and Domingo, 2010), but it was only when ethnographic research on online newsrooms emerged in the early 2000s, that close attention was paid to how the routines and professional culture of journalism interacted with technical developments, in order to shape the

definitions and practices of online journalism (Paterson and Domingo, 2008; Boczkowski, 2000, 2004, 2009).

Media scholars, who built on the DOI, used ethnographic approaches to understand the individual agency of innovation processes within newsrooms; for instance, Steensen's longitudinal case study (2009) of www.dagbladet.no, a Norwegian online newspaper, looked into the organisational structures of the newsroom, and found that a negotiation between the historical and contemporary axes of the newsroom shaped the journalists' new online roles. Boczkowski's (2004) influential longitudinal study of four US newsrooms also looked at the organisational structures, the work cultures of online and print newspapers, and the representation of the user within these broadcasting studios, shaped the dynamics of innovation.

3.3. Definition and Characteristics of Diffusion of Innovation

In his comprehensive book, *Diffusion of Innovation*, Everett Rogers (1983, p.11) defines diffusion as the 'process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system'; thus, diffusion of innovations seeks to explain how it is taken up in a population (Robinson, 2009). Rogers' definition contains four elements that are present in the DOI process: (a) 'innovation' is an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption (Bryant and Thompson, 2002, p.113; Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971, p.19); (b) 'communication channels' are the means by which messages get from one individual to another; (c) 'time' is involved in diffusion of innovation in terms of the rate of adoption: it is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system; and (d) 'social system' is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem-solving to accomplish a common goal. The members or units of a social system may be individuals, informal groups, organisations, and (or) subsystems. The social system constitutes a boundary within which an innovation diffuses.

In their study, Ryan and Gross (1943) classified the segments of Iowa farmers in relation to the amount of time it took them to adopt the innovation (hybrid corn

seed). The five units of farmers who adopted the hybrid corn seed - or adopter categories are: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. Building on Ryan and Gross's work, Rogers also integrated the pattern, process, and types of people into a synthesis of adopter categories based on 'innovativeness'. He identified several additional characteristics in the categories of adopters.

It is important to mention here that although additional names and titles for the adopters of an innovation have been used in other research studies, Everett Rogers' labels for the five categories are the preferred or standard ones for the industry. The specific characteristics that Rogers identifies for each category is not only of significance to media scholars, but also to workers interested in creating an integrated marketing plan that targets a specific audience; therefore, according to Roger's DOI (1971), those in the 'innovators' category are venturesome. They have the desire for the rash, the daring, and the risky, and have control of substantial financial resources to absorb possible loss from an unprofitable innovation; moreover, 'innovators' have the ability to understand and apply complex technical knowledge, and to cope with a high degree of uncertainty about an innovation, at the time of adoption (pp. 240-270).

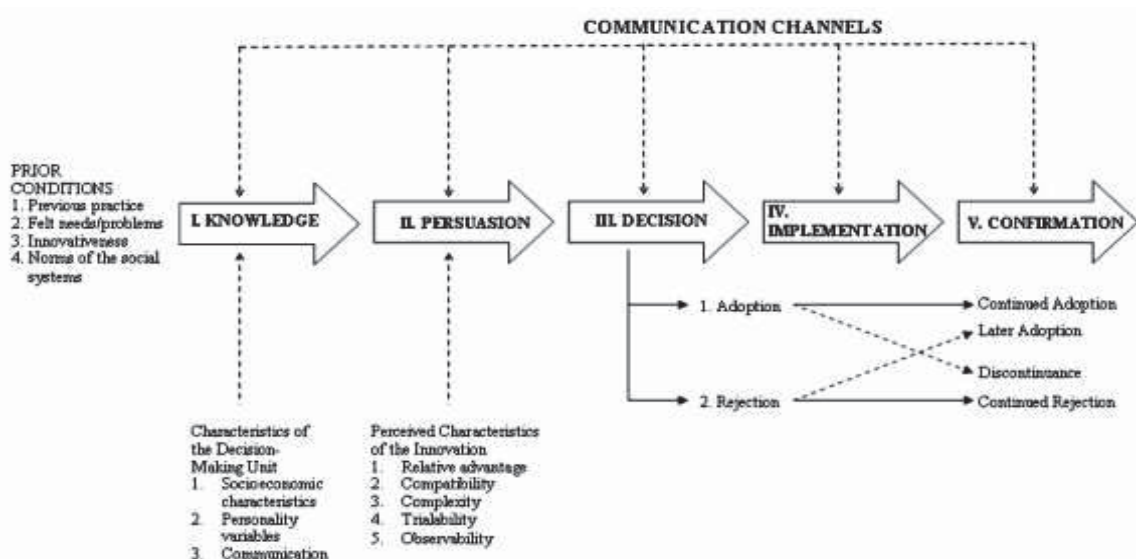
Those in the 'early adopters' category, were identified by Rogers as an integrated part of the local social system, with the greatest degree of opinion leadership; they not only serve as role models for other members of society, they are also respected by their peers and are successful (Rogers, 2003, p.283).

The 'early majority' category, on the other hand, is those representatives who form one-third of a system, making the early majority the largest category. Members of this group do not wish to be the first to adopt new technologies or new ideas; instead, they prefer to deliberate for a certain period of time, before making a decision to adopt. They frequently interact with peers, yet seldom hold positions of opinion leadership: the quote said by Alexander Pope 'be not the first by which the new is tried, nor the last to lay the old aside,' fits the thinking of the early majority.

They follow with conscious willingness in adopting innovations, but seldom lead (Rogers, 2003, p.283).

Similar to the early majority category, the ‘late majority’ members form one-third of a system. They are sceptical and cautious about the benefits of adoption, and wait until most of the community has tried to adopt the innovation, before it acts; sometimes peer-pressure or social pressures serve to motivate the late majority, but in other cases, economic necessity induces them (Rogers, 2003, p.284).

Finally, according to Rogers’ DOI theory, the ‘Laggards’ is an isolated category whose members possess no opinion leadership; they can either be very traditional or be isolates in their social system. If they are traditional, they are suspicious of innovations and often interact with others who also have traditional values; if they are isolates, their lack of social interaction decreases their awareness of an innovation’s demonstrated benefits; it takes much longer than average for laggards to adopt innovations, and once a laggard does so, the rest of society may have moved so far forward that the innovation has become outdated (Rogers, 2003, p.295). (Figure 3.1 below shows the model of Diffusion of Innovation)



Source: Rogers E. M., 2003, ‘Diffusion of Innovation’, 5th edition, New York: Free Press, p.170

Figure 3.1: Diffusion of Innovation Model

This study investigates the adoption and adaptation of new technologies in the Lebanese online newspapers, therefore, in applying Rogers' DOI theory to members of the Lebanese society, this research found that in adopting online news websites, the Lebanese fell between the 'late majority' and the 'laggards' categories; although the Lebanese are generally known for being the first to adapt to technology, compared to other Middle Eastern countries, when it came to online news they were overly cautious: even newspaper editors were late in adopting this new technology for their newspapers. This may be related to the fear of investing in a non-profitable media field, especially because most Lebanese print newspapers were, and still are, facing financial problems; moreover, advertising agents and companies did not believe in the online market as a medium for their advertising. This created a feeling of cautiousness and uncertainty from the Lebanese opinion leaders, thus they chose to observe how the international online newspapers would survive over time:

The tipping point is marked by opinion leader adoption. Well-informed opinion leaders communicate their approval or disapproval of an innovation, based on the innovators' experiences, relative to the rest of the social system. The majority responds by rapidly adopting. This analysis suggests that the spread of an innovation hinges on a surprisingly small point: namely, whether or not opinion leaders vouch for it (Orr, 2003).

3.4. The Adoption and Decision Processes

Rogers defines the adoption process 'as the mental process through which an individual passes from first hearing about an innovation to final adoption'; although more or fewer stages may exist, Rogers breaks this down into five stages: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption (1962, p.17).

In the 'awareness stage' the individual is exposed to the innovation, but lacks complete information about it; at the 'interest or information stage', the individual becomes interested in the new idea and seeks additional information about it; at the 'evaluation stage', the individual mentally applies the innovation to his present and anticipated future situation, and then decides whether or not to try it; during the 'trial stage', the individual makes full use of the innovation; and finally, at the 'adoption stage,' the individual decides to continue to fully use the innovation.

After an innovation has been adopted, the individual (or other decision-making unit such as a group, society, economy, or country) passes through the innovation-decision process; according to Rogers, this consists of first knowledge of the innovation, forming an attitude towards it, a decision to adopt or reject, implementation of the new idea, and confirmation of this decision. It is important to note here that prior conditions, such as previous practice, felt needs or problems, innovativeness, and norms of the social systems, affect the innovation-decision process (Rogers, 2003, p.177).

The first stage of the innovation-decision process entails seeking one or more of three types of knowledge about the innovation: ‘awareness knowledge’ (information that an innovation exists), the ‘how-to-knowledge’ (information necessary to use an innovation properly), and ‘principles knowledge’ (information dealing with the functioning principles underlying how the innovation works); according to Rogers, the awareness and knowledge of an innovation can be made most efficiently through mass media; although this research investigates how newspapers adopt a new technology, it is interesting to examine in further studies, whether mass media is still considered as the most efficient means in creating product awareness and knowledge (Rogers, 2003, p.21).

Based on Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovation theory, however, how are the adoption and decision processes of any relevance to newspapers’ adoption and adaptation to new technologies? One purpose of adopting any new technology in a newspaper is to increase sales, which will hopefully result in increased profits. It is through analysing and understanding the adoption process that newspaper owners and editors are able to develop a fully integrated marketing and communication plan, focused on a predetermined stage of the adoption process; moreover, the ‘knowledge stage’ of the innovation-decision process is of great value to editors-in-chief of newspapers because, at this vulnerable stage, they are able to create an impressionable impact on their target audience, therefore, they should focus their efforts on creating awareness and knowledge when promoting a new product or innovation such as online newspapers; besides, in the case of the Lebanese newspapers, editors and decision-makers of the studied newspapers passed through

the ‘first knowledge’ stage of the Internet, in order to form an attitude towards this new innovation, decided whether to adopt or reject online newspapers, implement this new idea, and finally, confirm their decision; yet, due to economic and political issues, they did not seek information at various stages in the innovation-decision process, in order to decrease uncertainty about the expected consequences of online newspapers, hence the delay by the Lebanese media in adopting and adapting to the interactive features of online newspapers, compared to other international online ones.

3.5. Qualities of Success in Diffusion of Innovation

After the adoption and decision processes, it is important to consider why certain innovations spread more quickly than others, and why others fail. Diffusion scholars (Rogers and Scott, 1997; Rogers, 2003, pp. 15-16) recognise five qualities that determine the success of an innovation:

- (i) ‘relative advantage’ is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes. What matters is whether an individual perceives the innovation as an advantage. There are no absolute rules for what constitutes ‘relative advantage’, however, an advantage can be economic advantage, social prestige, convenience, or satisfaction; the greater the perceived relative advantage of an innovation, the more rapid its rate of adoption is likely to be (Rogers, 2003, p. 15).
- (ii) ‘compatibility with existing values and practices’ is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters. An idea that is incompatible with their values, norms or practices will not be adopted as rapidly as one that is compatible. The adoption of an incompatible innovation often requires the prior adoption of a new value system, which is a relatively slow process (Rogers, 2003, p. 15).
- (iii) ‘simplicity and ease of use’ is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use. New ideas that are simpler to understand

are adopted more rapidly than those that require the adopter to develop new skills and understandings (Rogers, 2003, p. 15).

- (iv) 'trialability' is the degree to which an innovation can be experimented with on a limited basis. New ideas that can be tried on the instalment plan will generally be adopted more quickly than those that are not divisible. An innovation that is trialable represents less uncertainty and risk to the individual who is considering it for adoption (Rogers, 2003, p. 16).
- (v) 'observable results' is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others. The easier it is for individuals to see the results of an innovation, the more likely they are to adopt it. Such visibility stimulates peer discussion of a new idea, as friends and neighbours of an adopter, often request innovation evaluation information about it (Rogers, 2003, p. 16).

According to Everett Rogers, these five qualities determine between 49% and 87% of the variation in the adoption of new products. They not only make a valuable checklist to frame focus group discussions or project evaluations, but they can also help identify weaknesses to be addressed, when improving products or behaviours (Rogers, 2003, p. 221).

To sum it up, re-invention is a key principle in diffusion of innovations. The success of an innovation depends on how well it evolves to meet the needs of more and more demanding and risk-averse individuals in a population: a good example on re-invention is the history of the mobile phone. The launching of an online newspaper passed through many re-invention processes. A successful way to achieve this was to turn users or readers into partners in a continuous process of redevelopment. Computer games companies, pharmaceutical corporations and rural research institutes are instances of organisations that seek to make users active partners in improving innovations, by supporting user communities, or by applying participative action research techniques (Robinson, 2009). The concept of re-invention is important because it tells us that no product or process can rest on its laurels: continuous improvement is the key to spreading an innovation.

It can be concluded that the Diffusion of Innovation theory (DOI) draws upon rational theories of organisational life adopted from economics, sociology and communication theories. It develops predictive accounts of the diffusion phenomenon that supposedly helps technology implementers advance the dispersal of selected technologies; overall, DOI has sought to explain individual decisions to adopt. These decisions concern well-defined innovations (such as the Internet), and the adoption population is relatively homogeneous and has well defined boundaries. Some host factors, including the availability of information concerning technology (relative advantage, compatibility), adopter's properties (past experiences), characteristics of social system (social norms, management support, availability of change agents), and the communication process (through which media and how often) explains the decisions for adoption.

The adoption of the Internet, from a DOI point of view, creates path dependencies on earlier innovations such as the telephone, television and computers; moreover, the decision to invest in the Internet is not solely dependent on specific adopters (such as editors-in-chief and journalists), but on the readers or consumers of online newspapers. This shows that the success of an online newspaper does not depend on individual adopters' goals and desires, but also on the effectiveness of broader institutional and regulatory regimes. These regimes can employ measures to reduce innovation ambiguity and uncertainty. The adoption of an online newspaper had some barriers such as 'affordance': as different technologies afford different operations, they make some things easy to do while others seem difficult or impossible. The Internet affords newspapers many-to-many exchanges with users through emails and interactive publishing features, but not the intimate feeling a reader gets from revisiting one personal and eternal print copy. The notion of affordance enables us to assess how the distinctive material characteristics of one thing, may be realized by the 'actors' within its environment. Scholars such as Boczkowski (2001) have argued that a technological artefact's materiality by itself does not inevitably translate into a specific social action; thus the idea of affordance enables analysts to escape the twin problems of social and technological determinism by 'stressing the "potential" role played by the

“materiality” of things’ (Boczkowski, 2001, p. 19). Boczkowski (2001, pp. 20-22) also tackled the concept of ‘affording flexibility’ of technology or the broader spectrum of potentials that ‘the web affords actors used to construct content out of the relatively more rigid set of possibilities afforded by print’ – when exploring how technology evolved within three American newspapers in their process of moving online.

While the DOI theory believes that the five qualities that determine the success of an innovation are: the relative advantage, compatibility with existing values, practices, simplicity and ease of use, triability and observable results (Rogers, 2003, p.15-16), Boczkowski (1999, 2004b) found that team reflexivity – or conscious reflection on team functioning – shapes adoption and adaptation of innovation in the newsroom.

Rogers (1983, p.11) defines diffusion as the ‘process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system’; however, other scholars such as Boczkowski (2004a), Haas (2005), He & Zhu (2002), Sousa (2006) and Ursell (2001) propose that technological innovations are mediated and shaped by initial conditions and contextual characteristics. Journalism has not necessarily followed a ‘revolutionary’ trajectory as a result of the Internet. Some scholars such as Pavlik (1999) argued that such earlier predictions of the 1990s were typical instances of technological determinism. Fletcher (2003, p.304) explained how the interaction between market, state, and culture shaped the network development differently in each country; and contended that the videotext innovation was a ‘techno-political’ project.

In the case of online newspapers in Lebanon, editors and owners of print newspapers were, at first, cautious in launching an online version. Online news websites remained as trials and under observation until recently. It was only when people became familiar with surfing the Internet and reading news online that they attracted more attention; as a result, Lebanese print newspapers were quick to realise the ‘relative advantage’ of adopting an online newspaper; however, they

were circumspect on how compatible it would be with their values and media practices; for them, an online newspaper was difficult to understand and use. As will be explained later in this research, the terms ‘interactivity’ and ‘multimedia’ were buzzwords for most Lebanese editors-in-chief, consequently, online newspapers were still in the ‘trialability’ process with which editors-in-chief and readers were still experimenting with this new innovation or technology. Finally, until the date of this research, 2014, online newspapers in Lebanon were observing the results of adoption and adaptation to this news media format. This is clear in the continuous surveys and questionnaires posted on online newspapers requesting feedback on the content and design of the news websites.

3.6. Research Application

According to the diffusion of innovation theory (DOI) which have been previously discussed and from which it can be concluded that: (a) technologies are discrete packages developed by independent and neutral innovators; (b) technologies diffuse in a homogeneous fixed social ether called the ‘diffusion arena’, which is separate from the innovation locale; (c) the diffusion rate is a function of push and pull forces. The push factors include features of technology and channels of communication, and the pull factors are determined by the adopter’s rationale; (d) the adoption decisions are dependent on available information, preference functions and adopter’s properties; (e) diffusion traverses through distinct stages which exhibit little or no feedback; and (f) time scales are relatively short and the diffusion history is not important (Rogers 1995; Mahajan, Muller, and Bass, 1990, pp.1-26).

It can be proved that Lebanese online newspapers are not discrete packages developed by independent and neutral innovators by applying the DOI theory on how they adapted and adopted online versions; in fact, the editors-in-chief, journalists and readers construct the meaning of online newspapers differently: to the editors-in-chief, adopting an online newspaper was a must in a very competitive industry; to the journalists, online newspapers were an additional task to their daily busy schedule; and finally, to the Lebanese readers, an online version

is an electronic copy of a print newspaper. Local culture and the supporting infrastructure (education system, government policies and economic factors) shape these constructs and affect the adoption decisions in a Middle Eastern country such as Lebanon.

An innovation such as the adoption and adaptation of an online newspaper, on the other hand, has to be continuously poured into maintenance and modification. This changes the innovation over time; for example, the three studied Lebanese newspapers underwent major changes in their design and content since their launch in 1996; in addition, adopting an online version was not a simple task to Lebanese online editors-in-chief and journalists as it required continuous learning on how to adapt organisation processes, structures and technologies. This explains the long time span that Lebanese newspapers took to fully adjust to online features.

In the DOI theory, interactions between technology suppliers and adopters are expected to happen in a relatively homogenous space; however, the institutional arrangements, the business context, and the technological, political and economic constraints reshape the diffusion arenas. The political and economic changes caused by the Lebanese civil war radically affected the speed and course of the diffusion process of Lebanese online newspapers by drawing its boundaries, redefining involved entities and changing incentives.

Investigating the adoption and adaptation of new technologies by Lebanese newspapers confirmed that the push and pull forces did not form necessary and sufficient conditions for an adoption; in fact, the adoption process followed power dominance and certain economic and political strategies. The push forces frame the adoption decision as a rational choice problem between an old and a new technology (Rogers, 1995). The main source of decision information for Lebanese online newspapers was 'older' mass media such as newspapers, yet, these media organisations seldom followed what their rationale analysis suggested. None of the studied online newspapers performed any cost or benefit analyses of the adoption; in fact, the decision to adopt an online version was made owing to there being no

alternative; that is, the adoption was obligatory within a certain time period if they wished to remain in business.

According to DOI theory, the adoption decisions are dependent on available information, preference functions and adopter's properties. The Lebanese newspapers did not initially support the creation of an independent online version, but once it was assembled, several editors-in-chief were afraid of losing important business opportunities if they did not join, therefore, their strategy was not to maximise their benefits but to avoid losses: the choice of adopting an online version was not related to available information about the technology but to business strategies.

The Lebanese online newspapers traversed through distinct stages. These stages were embedded, that is, one diffusion arena could turn into another one; from the stage of publishing archive CDs, to that of publishing an online image and finally to the stage of publishing an online newspaper, the Lebanese online newspapers moved from a simple adoption to one at an industry level. The history of the decision of adoption is important because it forms an add-on to the existing technology base.

This research uses the theory of diffusion of innovation since it explains how new innovations, such as online newspapers, are being adopted and adapted; as previously discussed in this chapter 'the theory of diffusion of innovation states how a new idea, technique or technology, diffuses or spreads throughout a society in a predictable manner' (Bryant and Thompson, 2002, p.114).

The theory of diffusion of innovation is important for the study of mass communication in general, and for the adoption of the Internet and online news, in particular, for the following reasons. Historically, each of the major mass media was originally an innovation that had yet to be adopted and widely used. Melvin DeFleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach (1989) explained in their book entitled *Theories of Mass Communication* that the development of human communication passed through six ages or stages: signs and signals, speech and language, writing, print, mass communication, and computers. In each stage a new innovation was introduced to

society, none was initially adopted by the majority of the population however; only after some years, the use of these new technologies became more common as they were adopted by a larger proportion of the society (DeFleur and Dennis, 2002, p.8).

Mass media are often responsible for bringing new items to the attention of people who will eventually adopt them; for example, the innovation of the Internet changed the habits of reading and producing newspapers. Online newspapers allowed the receiver to read the updated news electronically at anytime and anywhere; to interact with them and thus become part of the news production. It also changed the communication routines, production processes and hiring criteria of newspapers.

While some media innovations spread more quickly than others, such as the television in comparison to the telegraph, others spread more slowly and were adopted by only a fraction of the population: 'in mass communication, the critical mass describes the point when adoption of an innovation takes off, when the greatest number of people begin to adopt it' (Bryant & Thompson, 2002, p.114). DOI helps to answer the research questions: Why have newspapers in Lebanon launched online versions? How are the three Lebanese online newspapers under study, adapting to the new media technologies?

Several theories exist that deal with innovation and change (such as Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory, Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory, Prochaska and DiClemente's Change Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour), the diffusion of innovation theory, however, takes a radically different approach:

Instead of focusing on persuading individuals to change, it sees change as being primarily about the evolution or 're-invention' of products and behaviours so they become better fits for the needs of individuals and groups. In diffusion of innovations it is not people who change, but the innovations themselves (Robinson, 2009).

This research focuses on the adoption and adaption of new technologies by the editors-in-chief and journalists, and not by the Lebanese print audience, therefore,

the changes that took place in the innovation - the online newspaper - are studied, rather than the changes in people's behaviour.

In conclusion, the theory of diffusion of innovation is applicable to this research, since it explains how the Lebanese news media adopted and adapted to a new innovation such as the Internet and online news; moreover, it also elaborates on how Lebanese editors-in-chief and journalists adopted and adapted to new technologies in their newsroom communication routines and production processes.

3.7. Limitation of the Theory

Although the theory of Diffusion of Innovation is considered as a credible model for change by most academics, the theory has some deficiencies that may hinder the study of adoption of new innovations; first, not all new innovations guarantee success and continuity as the theory assumed; when it comes to new technologies and innovations in the field of media and communication, many new devices failed or were outdated and never used again, as soon as a new invention was released - for example, with the invention of the computers, the Internet, the email, CDs and DVDs, the telegraph, typing machines, cassettes, faxes, video machines and even the tapes, are rarely or never used nowadays, and have become part of the history of mass media: 'advocated innovation is simply not functional enough' and does not resolve the performance gap and market demands (Zaltman et al., 1984, p.85).

There is, moreover, an underlying assumption that innovations are considered 'good', regardless of the consequences to the values and practices of journalism, commonly known as 'pro-innovation' bias. This inherent bias was highly criticised by many scholars (Downs and Mohr, 1976) and Rogers himself acknowledged this shortcoming in later editions of his theory (Rogers, 2003); similarly, although ranking individuals or groups in terms of adoption could be useful in identifying differences among types of news organisations that assume certain innovations at various intervals (vis-à-vis a 'critical mass'), it accepts the notion that 'pro-innovation' adds value to news-making, *ipso facto*; such a categorisation could yield to technologically deterministic assumptions about news innovations. It

would perhaps be more productive if media researchers turned their attention to understanding the consequences of certain multimedia innovations regarding the construction of online news, the professional values of journalism, and the quality of news products.

Time is another consideration when dealing with new innovations such as the Internet, in general, and online news in particular. Nelson Polsby (1984, p. 174) argues that the ‘most common mistake made by observers and participants who favour innovation is to give up too soon, to measure gains only in the very short run’, thus becoming discouraged. Studying the adoption of the Internet in less developed countries such as Lebanon, presents different problems, since financial restrictions (purchasing a computer, subscription to the Internet) and technological illiteracy, may be important factors preventing some people from reading the news online, in comparison to those living in the US, UK and Canada, for example; consequently, studying how Lebanese editors-in-chief and journalists adapted to using the Internet as a new media technology does not provide a full objective picture of the acceptance of new technologies by all the Lebanese population.

It is difficult to clearly mark the boundaries between the adoption by ‘individuals’ and that by ‘groups’ or ‘social systems’. How can the differentiation be made between the diffusion patterns of a member in an organisation, and those ‘within’ members of a group or society? Similarly, what distinctions (if any) can be made to differentiate the diffusion ‘between groups’ and ‘within groups’? If a news organisation adopts a multimedia artefact, is that considered a ‘within group’ or ‘between-groups’ diffusion? What quantitative or qualitative patterns are formed over time as increasing numbers of members, such as news professionals, decide to adopt the innovation? The diffusion of innovation theory does not provide clear answers to these and many other questions.

Finally, according to the DOI theory the innovation is an ‘end’ product rather than a continuum that could follow multiple trajectories. ‘Innovations do not remain static during the innovation process, rather, they may be transformed by it’ (Slappendel, 1996, p. 121). This perspective led to many media studies looking at

the effects of innovation rather than development in the newsrooms, therefore, there is a need to understand news innovation within a wider continuum, looking at the processes and dynamics of adoption, as well as the adaptations made to the material technological artefacts introduced into each news organisation. There is also a need to bring empirical and comparative evidence about how news organisations appropriate multimedia innovations, and how this, in turn, shapes the evolution of multimedia (Slappendel, 1996, p. 122).

Regardless of the limitations that the theory of Diffusion of Innovation has, it remains the most applicable theory in describing the adoption of new technologies. It best describes how different categories of people or organisations react and deal with new technology such as the Internet and online news, as will be discussed in chapters Six, Seven and Eight of this research.

3.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the characteristics of Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, the adoption and decision processes and the qualities of success required for a change to be adopted in a society; in addition, it examined the history, orientation, definition and limitations of the theory.

It is interesting to note that research concerning the diffusion of innovation process has increased significantly in the last few decades where it has proven to be versatile, universal, but most importantly, relevant. It can be tracked on a micro level: an individual who is a targeted member of an audience; or at the macro level: economic development or technological advances.

According to An Nguyen (2007), the fate and shape of a new technology depend on four interrelated factors: (i) the historical context in which it is introduced (market trends, legal regulations affecting the technology); (ii) its technical nature, (iii) the people who created the artefact; and (iv) the people who use and respond to the artefact (Nguyen, 2007). Nguyen agrees with Everett Rogers' theory on the diffusion of innovation, maintaining that adaption of new technology depends on the people who create, use and respond to it.

Based on Ryan and Gross's diffusion studies, Rogers identified five different types of adopters in the diffusion process: innovators (venturesome), early adopters (respectable), early majority (deliberate), late majority (sceptical), and laggards (traditional) (Rogers, 2003, p. 22). Rogers defines the innovation-decision process as that through which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation to forming an attitude towards it, making a decision to adopt or reject it, implementing and using the new idea, and confirming this decision; however, in order for an innovation to be successfully adopted, it must have a relative advantage, be compatible in values and practice, be simple and easy to use, be 'trialable' and have observable results.

It has been observed in this research, that when it comes to reading news online, the Lebanese passed through the five elements which Rogers described in his theory. Most Lebanese websites remained in the 'trial stage' for a long time, (to be discussed later in this thesis); until the date of this research (2014), the three studied Lebanese newspapers were still encountering a change in their design and content; even editors and journalists were late in applying new technologies to their communication routines and production processes; in addition, readers were careful about adopting the 'habit' of reading news online. This may be related to the fear of investment in a non-profitable media field, due to the political situation and lack of funding which have undoubtedly played a major role in the hesitation to adopt this new technology.

This research found that the application of Rogers' 'innovativeness' theory to members of the Lebanese society, revealed that online newspapers in Lebanon fall between the 'late majority' and the 'laggards' categories; although the Lebanese are generally recognised for being the first to adapt to new technology in comparison with other Middle East countries, when it came to online news they were considerably cautious.

In this chapter, the Diffusion of Innovation theory was examined and discussed. This theory has uncovered how online newspapers in Lebanon adopted and adapted to new technologies. The analysis, underpinned by the rationale of

launching an online newspaper and newsroom production, provided further understanding in the ways Lebanese online newspapers adopted new technologies.

It is hoped that, through the application of the diffusion of innovation theory, the results of the study will answer the research questions and confirm some of the arguments, namely, why and how traditional newspapers go online; in order to do so, this research uses three methods: ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews and content analysis which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Methodology of the Study

4.1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to examine the research methodology used in order to explore online newspapers in Lebanon, in terms of their adoption and adaptation to new technology. The research methodology conducted in this thesis was a multiple research design. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003, p. 11) define the ‘multiple method’ as ‘research in which more than one method or more than one worldview is used’; however, more recently, the alternative of combining methods - the multi-method approach - has emerged in different research areas, as a way of improving the research process and findings. According to Morse (2003, p.196), ‘multiple methods are used in a research program when a series of projects are interrelated within a broad topic, and designed to solve an overall research problem’.

This research collected information between 2008 and 2014, on the rationale, production processes and the use of multimedia of two Lebanese print newspapers and their electronic editions, *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*. The study involved a combination of three research approaches: ethnographic observations, ethnographic interviews, and content analysis of these three online newspapers located in Beirut, Lebanon.

This chapter first discusses how the qualitative and quantitative methods were approached, followed by a discussion of the three research methods used in this study in terms of rationale and purposes, research sites, samples of the study, data collection and data analysis procedures, including the issues of validity, reliability and ethics of the study.

4.2. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

In media studies, the qualitative method tends to answer questions such as ‘why’ and ‘how’, rather than ‘what’, which quantitative study can help to answer. While it is understood that the central goal of qualitative research is to document the

world from the point of view of the people studied, quantitative research is concerned with attitudes rather than simply behaviour (Hammersley, 1992, pp. 165-166). 'Qualitative methods are designed to explore and assess things that cannot easily be summarized numerically' (Priest, 1996, p. 5), while 'quantitative research is a genre which uses a special language, similar to the ways in which scientists talk about how they investigate the natural order – variables, control, measurement, and experiment' (Bryman, 1988, p. 12).

Some scholars have chosen not to use the quantitative and qualitative distinction and have instead used synonymous terms. 'Positivist' and 'empiricist' often denote the same fundamental approach as 'quantitative', while 'naturalistic' field research, 'ethnographic', 'interpretivist', and 'constructivist' are sometimes used instead of 'qualitative' (Lutz and Ramsay, 1974, pp. 5-9; Wilson, 1977, pp. 245-65). Quantitative methodology is routinely depicted as an approach to the conduct of social research which applies a natural science, and in particular, a positivist approach to social phenomena. The paraphernalia of positivism are typically characterised in the methodological literature as exhibiting a preoccupation with operational definitions, objectivity, replicability and causality (Giddens, 1974, pp. 1-22); on the other hand, qualitative methodology differs in a number of ways: it is a commitment to seeing the social world from the point of view of the actor. Qualitative research is deemed to be much more fluid and flexible than quantitative research in that it emphasises discovering novel or unanticipated findings, and the possibility of altering research plans in response to such occurrence (Wilson, 1977, pp. 249-259). This is contrasted sharply with the quantitative methodologist's research, with its emphasis upon fixed measurements, hypothesis testing, and a much less protracted form of fieldwork involvement. Positivist approaches are taken to exhibit a tendency for the researcher to view events from the outside and from the point of view of a cluster of empirical concerns which are imposed upon social reality, with little reference to the meaning of the observations to the subject of investigation (Spradely, 1979, p. 194).

Qualitative researchers suggest that we should not assume that techniques used in quantitative research are the only way of establishing the validity of findings from qualitative or field research (Silverman, 2000, p.7). This means that a number of practices which originate from quantitative studies may be inappropriate for qualitative research:

These include the assumptions that social sciences research can only be valid if based on experimental data, official statistics or the random sampling of populations, and that quantified data are the only social fact that is valid or that can be generalized' (Silverman, 2000, p. 7).

Klaus Bruhn Jensen (2002, p. 207) indicates that there is no 'research method better than the other'; nevertheless, the multiple research techniques tend to strengthen each other in order to yield greater reliability. According to Jensen (2002), qualitative and quantitative research are characterised by their forms of data collection and the resulting types of evidence. Jensen (2002, p. 207) also proposes six different proto-typical empirical methods for conducting research: interviewing, observation and discourse analysis are categorised as qualitative methodology, while surveys, experiments and content analysis study are classified as quantitative methodology. This is presented in table 4.1 below.

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Speech/Verbal language	Interviewing	Survey
Action/ Behaviour	Observation	Experiment
Texts/Documents	Discourse analysis	Content analysis

Source: Klaus J.B. 2002. 'A Handbook of Media and Communication: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies', London & New York: Routledge: p. 207

Table 4.1: Six Prototypical Empirical Methods

Table 4.1 above shows that quantitative studies are covered both in terms of their basic categories and operations, and with reference to the different relevance of surveys, experiments and content analyses; on the other hand, qualitative studies are presented in terms of the systematic process of interviewing, observation and textual research, including issues of data collection and data analysis (Jensen,

2002, p. 207). The way in which qualitative and quantitative research complement each other is examined with reference both to concrete examples and to classic problems in the philosophy of science.

John Brewer and Albert Hunter (1989, p. 74) point out:

the pragmatism of employing multiple research methods to study the same general problem by posing different specific questions has some pragmatic implications for social theory. Rather than being wed to a particular theoretical style and its most compatible method, one might instead combine methods that would encourage or even require integration of different theoretical perspectives to interpret the data.

Silverman agrees: ‘the choice between different research methods should depend upon what you are trying to find out at the end of your research’ (2001, p. 11).

The implications and advantages of quantitative and qualitative research methods were considered, and this thesis employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine the newspapers’ production processes, and the use of multimedia features presented in three Lebanese online newspaper samples. This followed the concept of the complementary use of qualitative and quantitative research methods in media and communication research proposed by Jensen (2002, pp. 254-272) and was used in this thesis, combined with the chosen research methods: ethnographic observations, interviews and content analysis, discussed in this chapter.

4.3. Ethnographic Observations

This thesis uses ethnographic observations to study the adoption and adaptation of new technologies in newspaper communication practices and production procedures, and most importantly, this method will explore the research question: ‘What are the implications of the adoption of new technologies on work routine, production process and employment criteria?’

Ethnographic observations are an efficient method for studying the day to- day operation of newspapers, as they involve direct observation and listening, and include joining newsroom production processes and being able to ask questions, become aware of the perspectives of editors, journalists, webmasters and

newsroom staff, as a participant and an observer, in order to gather information on the processes of news production and newsroom routine. It is worth noting here that, while conducting newsroom observations, the relationship between print and online newspaper newsrooms was studied in terms of the journalists' routine, work presentation deadlines, news sources and beat system¹¹.

The following sub-sections will discuss the ethnographic observations method. These include definition and purposes, advantages and disadvantages, samples and units of the study, research sites and dates, the methods of data collection, observation topics, data analysis procedure, and the validity and reliability of the methods, including research ethics issues.

4.3.1. Definition and Purpose of Ethnographic Observations

Margaret Diane Le Compte and Jean Schensul (1999, pp. 1-2) state in their book, *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research*, that:

ethnography takes the position of human behaviour, and the ways in which people construct and make meaning of their worlds and their lives are highly variable and locally specific. Ethnographic observations use the researcher's eyes and ears as the primary modes for data collection.

Le Compte and Schensul believe that the product of ethnographic observations is an interpretive story, a reconstruction or narrative about a group of people (or a community). The observer collects a quantity of historical material and with it paints a picture of people going about their daily lives, over a relatively representative period of time.

The content of an ethnography research can address some or all of the following: beliefs; attitudes; perceptions; emotions; verbal and nonverbal means of communication; social networkers; behaviour of the group of individuals with friends, family, associates, fellow workers, and colleagues; use of tools; technology and manufacture of materials and artefacts; and patterned use of space and time (1999, p.4).

¹¹ A beat is where a reporter is assigned to cover the same group, organization or geographic area on a regular basis (Hallman, 2005; Meyers, 1992; Sanchez, 2007).

Mason (1996, p. 60) refers to ethnographic observation as a method of generating data which involves the researchers submerging themselves into a research setting and systematically observing dimensions of that setting including interactions, relationships, actions and events.

It is noteworthy here that ethnographic research is rooted in the discipline of social and cultural anthropology, in which an ethnographer is required to spend a significant amount of time in the field he or she is studying. Ethnographers become part of the life of people they are studying (Lewis, 1985) and seek to place the phenomena studied in their social and cultural context. This method could be applied not only to people's lives, but also to organisations, societies, and newspaper companies.

The researcher used ethnographic observation because it was considered to be a significant research method for studying how media content is produced. The study conducted by Hansen et al. (1998, p. 44) mentions that: 'ethnographic observation goes behind the scenes of media output to help reveal the complex of forces, constraints and conventions that inform the shape, selections and silences of media output'; moreover, ethnographic observation typically deploys a number of methods, such as observation, formal and informal interviews, attending to documentary sources, and so on. It is the method most often used in studies of media organisations and production processes, which provides findings and insights that are unavailable by other means, for example, by a survey study, experimental study, and so on (Hansen et al., 1998). Data from observation in real contexts is likely to be of better quality and to reflect a closer view of what actually happens, than data gathered from the artificially created and controlled environments of interviews or questionnaires.

Another reason for choosing to conduct ethnographic observations for this study is that, as a former journalist who is familiar with newsroom practices, the researcher recognises the enormous advantages of conducting newsroom observation in order to achieve the aims and purpose of this study. Ethnographic observations through various methods, including newsroom observations, discussions with newsroom

staff and scrutiny of documents; however, although the researcher's involvement was only partial in some activities of the news production routine, it did help in the discovery of the 'inner workings' of the organisations, and provided information regarding the news production process of each Lebanese newspaper organisation sample under scrutiny.

4.3.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnographic Observation

Similar to any other research methods, ethnographic observation has its advantages and disadvantages. Nason and Golding (cited in Symon and Cassel, 1998, p. 234) pointed out three main advantages of ethnographic observation methods: the data being collected by observation are less obtrusive because they are less likely to be influenced by researchers; the data being collected from the client system can lead to greater depth of sensitive variations and nuances of meaning. One of the most valuable aspects of ethnographic research is its depth as it allows the researcher to be 'there' for an extended period of time, and to see what people are doing as well as what they say they are doing (Myers, 1999, p. 2). As Grills (1998b, pp. 3-18) pointed out, by going to 'where the action is', the field researcher develops an intimate familiarity with the dilemmas, frustrations, routines, relationships, and risks that are part of everyday life. The profound strength of ethnography is that it is the most 'in-depth' or 'intensive' research method possible (Myers, 1999, pp. 5-6). Finally, ethnographic observation methods are suitable for longitudinal surveys, which can examine changes taking place in the host culture or subculture, using the same variables over a period of time. Wimmer and Dominick (2006, pp. 112-113) note that the greatest advantage of ethnographic observation study is that it is usually inexpensive and takes place in the natural setting of the activity being observed, and thus, can provide data rich in detail and subtlety. LeCompte and Schensul agree:

much like naturalists, ethnographic researchers learn through systematic observation in the field by interviewing and carefully recording what they see and hear, as well as how things are done, while learning the meanings that people attribute to what they make and do (1999, pp. 1-2).

In contrast, several scholars have addressed the limitations of ethnographic observations. As Brewer and Hunter (1989, pp. 45-46) point out, the small scale of the sample can lead to doubts about whether the sample and the observation's findings are representative. Unlike a survey, an ethnographer usually studies just the one organisation or the one culture. This limitation is a common criticism of ethnographic research for it leads to an in-depth knowledge only of particular contexts and situations. Some scholars go further and argue that it is impossible to develop more general models from just one ethnographic study (Myers, 1999, p. 7). Hansen et al. (1998, p. 62) also address the weaknesses of ethnographic observation study, suggesting that if the researcher occasionally steps outside of the immediate production domain and researches the surrounding institutional context, hierarchy and decision-making, the method can also accommodate the influence of wider corporate culture, the context, and forces of change. One of the main disadvantages of using ethnographic observations is that it takes a lot longer than most other kinds of research: not only does the fieldwork extend over a protracted period, but the analysis of the material and writing it up require considerable time.

The ethnographic observation study apparently has its limitations, but Brewer and Hunter (1989, pp. 45-46) argue that it sometimes leads to extremely interesting insights about the members of the groups being observed; in this study, they have the advantage of taking place in the natural setting of the newsrooms of two print and online newspapers, and a born-on-the-web newspaper in Lebanon. The researcher was not only able to gather data on the day-to-day activities in the production processes from the observations, but also important information from discussions and informal interviews with the newspapers' staff.

Since ethnography often leads the researcher to question what he or she 'takes for granted' in life, as a former journalist working 'in the field', the experience of spending time in the *Annahar*, *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra* newsrooms gave, what this researcher considers to be, an opportunity to closely observe and understand online newspapers in their natural environment. A key strength is that it supplied the

researcher with a much more comprehensive perspective than other forms of research.

4.3.3. Application to Research

The ethnographic observation method to study three online Lebanese newspapers was chosen for the following reasons. Ethnographic observation, as defined above, includes historical material about the group(s), institutions or communities being studied; in order to understand the adoption and adaptation to new technologies, the investigation of the history and development of these Lebanese online newspapers was required.

As previously mentioned, ethnographic observation paints a picture of the daily lives of people or institutions as they happen, over a relatively representative period of time, consequently, this research investigated the daily life of an online newspaper: its history, rationale, policy, staff members (journalists and editors) and their beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, verbal and nonverbal means of communication, social networkers, behaviour of individuals within the group and with their colleagues, use of tools, technology and manufacture of materials and artefacts, and patterned use of space and time. Finally, from the four different types of approach used in this research: holistic, semiotic, behaviouristic (Sanday, 1979, pp. 527-538) and critical (Thomas, 1993); for the purposes of this research, ‘critical ethnography’ approach was selected. This research is an emergent process which involves a dialogue between the people working in an online newspaper and the researcher. In all three online newspapers, the researcher spent her time conversing with journalists, editors-in-chief and founders. The goal was to ‘open to scrutiny otherwise hidden agendas, power centers, and assumptions that inhibit, repress, and constrain’ (Thomas, 1993, pp. 2-3).

4.3.4. Ethnographic Observation Samples and Unites

Two online newspapers published in Beirut, Lebanon – *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* and a born-on-the-web newspaper *Elnashra* – were chosen for newsroom observation by purposive sampling. The two print newspaper samples

(*Annahar* and *Aldiyar*) were selected for three reasons: (i), according to *Arab Media Outlook* (2009-2013) and the *Nielsen Company* (2013), *Annahar* is the major and most famous, national daily, Arabic-language newspaper in Lebanon, and appears within the top ten circulation ratings; *Aldiyar*, is a widespread Arabic-language newspaper in Lebanon and neighbouring countries; (ii) these newspapers each has an online version that includes regular news updates; and (iii) both newspapers have recently enhanced major changes in their design and content. *Elnashra* was chosen because it is one of the most ‘surfed’ online newspapers in Lebanon and is referred to as a ‘reliable’ news source in many broadcasting media (*Arab Media Outlook* 2009-2013; the *Nielsen Company* <http://www.nielsen.com/lb/en.html>, retrieved 15 September 2014).

The profile of the three newspapers samples where the ethnographic observation took place, are detailed in table 4.2 below:

News-paper Title	Website Address	Language	Newspaper Type	Period	Publisher
<i>Annahar</i>	www.annaharonline.com	Arabic	Quality National	Daily	<i>Dar Annahar</i> Publishing House
<i>Aldiyar</i>	www.charlesayoub.com	Arabic	Mass National	Daily	<i>Dar Al-Nahda</i> Publishing House
<i>El-nashara</i>	www.elnashra.com	Arabic	Quality National	Daily	-

Table 4.2: Profile of three Newspaper Samples

4.3.5. Ethnographic Observations Sites and Dates

The ethnographic observations took place at the main newsrooms of each of the three newspaper organisations in Beirut, Lebanon - the same samples used in the content analysis - and were conducted between October and November 2008. The details of research sites, including the location and date of the observations and activities of the study, are shown in table 4.3 below.

Research Sites	Address	Date	Activities
Print and online newsroom of <i>Annahar</i>	<i>Annahar</i> Building, Martyr Square, Beirut, Lebanon Phone: +961-1-994888 Fax: +961-1-996777	From 6-10 October , 2008	Newsroom observation and informal interviews
Print and online newsroom of <i>Aldiyar</i>	<i>Al Nahda</i> Building, Yarzeh, Baabda, Lebanon Phone: +961-5-923830 Fax: +9615923773	From 3-7 November, 2008	Newsroom observation and informal interviews
Newsroom of <i>Elnashra</i>	<i>Furn-el-Shebbak</i> , Ain El-Remmaneh, Beirut, Lebanon Phone: +961-1-290700 Fax: +9611290700	From 8-12 September, 2008	Newsroom observation and informal interviews

Table 4.3: List of Research Sites and Dates of Ethnographic Observations

The results from these observations provided the relevant records for the development of online newspapers in terms of their newsroom communication routines and production process, which illustrated if and how they had adopted and adapted to new technologies. The following sections examine the ethnographic observations method conducted in this thesis, including the research instrument design, data collection and analysis procedures and research ethics issues.

4.3.6. Methods of Data Collection for Ethnographic Observations

Ethnographic observations have been utilised in this study, as discussed earlier, which involve several techniques of data collection, including newsroom observations and talks with the newsroom staff and scrutiny of company profile documents. It is important to note here that the observations in this research were only partial: the researcher was able to observe the newsroom routine and production process but was not permitted to attend the news meetings; however, informal interviews and conversations were noted throughout the observation period.

The following guide was classified to help the record scheme, before conducting the newsroom observations. The aim of the observational record was to discover as much information as possible about the daily routine of online newspapers in

Lebanon, with regard to their production process; seven main topics were planned for recording the information as detailed in the table 4.4 below.

- | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history and current state of the newspaper • The development of both print and online editions • The newsroom communication routines of print and online versions • The aim of launching an online version • The use of new technologies in the production system of print and online versions (production processes) • The effect of using new communication technologies in its production process on the work routine, news sources, hiring criteria • The journalists working in the newsrooms: their role, daily routine, deadlines, news sources, relationship with other departments and (or) colleagues, work stress, shifts |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 4.4: Guidelines for Newsroom Observation Topics

The researcher was introduced as a research observer and as such, was allowed to participate in some newsroom routines; this included sitting with the production team while they were working, and directly observing the routine work of newsroom staff. Informal interviews and conversations with them were conducted regarding the details of the operations. The production processes were explained and demonstrated, step-by-step, by the appropriate newsroom staff, and the researcher spent one week in each newsroom of the three newspaper samples, in order to observe the production processes of both print and online editions. The topics in the guideline were used for observing and interviewing, and the information was taken down in note form for future reference. The profile and history of the company was recorded in a document format, and the data collected were analysed through qualitative procedures, as detailed in the next section.

4.3.7. Analysis of Ethnographic Observation Data

The data collected from the ethnographic observation of the newsroom routines and from talking to the journalists, editors-in-chief and the information technology (IT) manager, were analysed by qualitative methods such as generating, grouping, summarising and discussing, to explore the final results. This study undertook seven data analysis stages as set out by Marshall and Rossman (2006): (i) organisation of the data; (ii) immersion in the data; (iii) generating categories and themes; (iv) coding the data; (v) offering interpretations; (vi) searching for

alternative understandings; and (vii) writing up the findings. The process of data analysis is non-linear, time-consuming, and complex, and the approach adopted for each stage is further explained below.

At first, newsroom observation data were generated, grouped and summarised. All data from field notes were then translated from Arabic to English by the researcher, and the data from observation field notes (particularly the production processes) were converted into diagrams and descriptions. The information and perspectives gathered from conversations were summarised and grouped into the topics that had been previously set out. Finally, the data were analysed in qualitative terms to provide the foundational information for conducting newspaper content analysis.

4.3.8. Validity and Reliability of Ethnographic Observations

Arthur Berger points out in his book, *Media Research Techniques* (1998, p.106) that the observer is faced with concerns such as: ‘how do you obtain focus?’; ‘what is to be observed?’; ‘how do you record your observations, without changing the natural dynamics of what you are observing?’; ‘how do you make sure your notes and records are accurate?’; how do you relate to those being observed and still maintain objectivity?’; ‘how much can you generalise from your observations?’; and ‘how do you need to qualify your generalisations?’.

Ethnographic observations were conducted after contacting three editors of the three newspaper samples and an IT manager, via telephone and emails, informally requesting their cooperation. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and gave details of the periods of ethnographic observations, including the specific issues to be observed and discussed during the study.

More than one month was required in order to conduct the ethnographic observations at the three online newspapers *Annahar*, *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra*; in addition to the difficulty of scheduling the dates and times of the researcher’s visits, most of the journalists and editors-in-chief were busy with their daily routine and work - they did not have sufficient time to answer all the researcher’s

questions - thus, the researcher had to depend most of the time on her personal observations to collect the required information. This problem was very obvious at the *Aldiyar* newsroom where its journalists (in 2008), were simultaneously performing the task of a print journalist and an online one. The dates were finally set and informal interviews and conversations were conducted in the newsroom while observation was undertaken by the researcher. The information gathered from observing newsrooms' production processes and the work of online journalists in addition to the interviews with the newsrooms' journalists were recorded in brief notes. It is important to mention here that ethnographic research is highly dependent on the researcher's observations and interpretations, as Myers points out:

observer's bias is almost impossible to eliminate. For this reason, there is no way to check the validity of the researcher's conclusion, since numerical data is rarely provided (1999, p. 7).

4.3.9. Ethical Issues in Ethnographic Observations

Ethnographic observations in this study involved the researcher explaining the purpose of the research to the editors, journalists and those in the newsrooms of the three newspaper samples, and being clear about what was to be researched, why it was being researched, and how the findings would be used. The researcher's participation was limited in order not to distract the staff from their work routine. A general problem for all research is that research participants may alter their behaviour, or not express their true opinions in the presence of the researcher; for this reason, during the ethnographic observations, the researcher reassured the participants of the aims of the research and how the research findings would be used. This is a matter of ethical research practice and possibly helps build rapport and trust between the researcher and participants involved in the study.

The researcher, as an observer, is also aware of research issues and conduct that may lead to bias; consequently, whilst needing to become involved with the people and production processes in the newsrooms, the researcher also tried to remain

detached, and to guard against the possibility of over-identifying with the participants who were observed and interviewed. The key aim of these ethnographic observations was the attempt to adopt the perspectives of the editors and journalists as closely as possible, and interpret situations in the same way as the participants being studied. The skills and experiences the researcher gained from working in a journalistic environment were the main factors for choosing to observe newspaper newsrooms; this ensured that the quality of the data gathered by ethnographic observations in this study were reliable, although the researcher was concerned about what should be included and excluded in the research and the reasons for doing so, and how these values and choices might affect the research.

4.4. Ethnographic Interviews

In order to gather information about production processes, including additional information on the rationale, development and role of online newspapers in Lebanon, semi-structured, face-to-face, and Skype interviews were conducted. The findings from these interviews helped to enrich the information gathered from the newsroom observations. These interviews were divided into two parts: the first was conducted in 2008 with three editors-in-chief, an online journalist, an assistant editor, and an IT manager, from each of the three newspaper samples where the ethnographic observations took place. The aim was to explore deeper information about the history of print and online versions of the newspapers, the rationale behind launching an online version, their production processes, employment criteria, and organisational development, which also supported the findings from the ethnographic observations. The second part was carried out in 2014, with four journalists and an editor-in-chief working in the online departments of the three studied newspapers, in Lebanon. The data from the interviews held in 2014 provided information about the development, roles and work routine of online newspapers.

The reason for the division was that in 2008 the online departments did not exist *per se*, for the online versions of the print newspapers *Annahar* and *Aldiyar*, the contents of *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* were replica copies of the print

versions, consequently, at that time, the editors-in-chief did not see the need to establish an online department. The major changes that all three newspaper samples encountered in 2011, however, resulted in the launching of an online department, therefore the researcher found it important to update the data, by conducting interviews via Skype with the journalists and editors-in-chief working on the online versions. The interviews held in 2014 provided a fuller picture of the new developments of online newspapers in Lebanon, and should answer the research questions: ‘why have newspapers in Lebanon launched online versions?’ and ‘how are the three Lebanese online newspapers under study adapting to the new media technologies?’

The details of how interviews were conducted will be divided into eight sections: definition and purpose, advantages and disadvantages, applicability to research, samples and units of the study, research sites and dates, methods of data collection, data analysis procedure and research ethics issues, and are discussed below.

4.4.1. Definition and Purpose of Interviews

This study chose to utilise interviews as one of the three research methods. Barbara Sherman Heyl (2001, p. 369) defines:

ethnographic interviewing as one [of the] qualitative research techniques [...], where interviews have traditionally been conducted in-situ during lengthy field studies. [...] ethnographic interview[s] are those projects where researchers have established respectful, on-going relationships with their interviewees, including enough rapport for there to be a genuine exchange of views and enough time and openness in the interviews for the interviewee to explore purposefully with the researcher the meanings they place on events in their worlds.

The difference between the ethnographic interview and any other, is the time factor, which is the duration and frequency of contact, and the quality of the emerging relationship; according to James Spradley (1979, pp. 59-60), ethnographic interviews include certain elements that distinguish them from ‘friendly conversations’: first, there is a specific request to conduct the interview (resulting from the research questions); second, ethnographic explanations in which the researcher explains the project or the noting of certain statements; these are completed by everyday language explanations, interview explanations, and

clarification of certain questions, thus introducing the reasons for asking explicit questions.

The main element in the ethnographic interview is the participant observation. A particular problem is how to shape conversations arising in the field into interviews in which the unfolding of the other's specific experiences is aligned with the issue of the research in a systematic way. The opportunities for an interview often arise spontaneously and surprisingly from regular field contacts (Flick, 2006, p. 166).

The primary objectives of ethnographic interviews are to obtain information about people's views of their own world. With this gathered information, the researcher can then create a framework to describe, analyse, and interpret the group cultures, their shared beliefs, behaviour, language and other observed patterns of that group; on the other hand, ethnographic questions include descriptive, structural and contrast enquiries. The structural questions should show how informants organise their knowledge about the issue being investigated, whereas the contrast questions should provide information about the meaning dimensions used by informants to differentiate objects and events in their worlds. Raymond Madden (2010, p. 73) suggests in his book, *Being Ethnographic: A guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography*, that ethnographic questions are to interrogate in a manner that draws out descriptive (how do you...?), structural (what's the relationship between....?) and comparative (what's the difference between...?) responses from an interviewee. A good ethnographic interview will give the ethnographer insight into how a participant sees the world in analytical, typological, and relative ways, and such information helps to create an insight into the participant's world view.

Scholars of communication studies use ethnographic research methods to analyse communication behaviour, seeking to answer the 'why' and 'how come' questions of human interaction (Rubin and Piele, 2005, p. 229). Communication scholars, similar to anthropologists, often immerse themselves, participate in and (or) directly observe the particular social group being studied (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 117).

In conclusion, the key form of ethnographic interviews is:

to learn how to structure the interviews so that they are experienced as polite or comfortable exchanges on the part of the participants, and to learn how to pose questions within this comfortable structure (Madden, 2010, p.75).

From the rationale revealed above, interviews have been conducted with two groups of Lebanese people for two purposes: the interviews with a group of editors-in-chief and a webmaster of three newspaper samples aimed to investigate their rationale and employment criteria; and secondly, the interviews with a group of Lebanese journalists aimed at gathering information about their work routines, deadlines, beat [A beat is where a reporter is assigned to cover the same group, organization or geographic area on a regular basis (Hallman, 2005; Meyers, 1992; Sanchez, 2007)] system, news sources and relationship with the other print journalists and departments; according to the foregoing, the face-to-face and Skype semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study to yield the relevant information and perspectives from these two groups of participants, in order to underpin the findings from newsroom observations regarding gaining an understanding of how online newspapers adopted and adapted to new technologies.

4.4.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethnographic Interviews

The researcher was concerned with the advantages and disadvantages of this research method prior to conducting interviews for the study. The ethnographic interview, As Dobosz states:

makes a perfect start in the relationship of a researcher and the organizational actor. As it resembles a more casual conversation than a structured interview, it gives great opportunity for both parties to get acquainted and for rapport to develop (2003, p. 292)

thus, this rapport between the respondent and interviewer facilitates the approach to certain topics that might be taboo such as financial and ownership issues through other approaches (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p. 135); moreover, an ethnographic interview is an excellent base for establishing relationships with people and for working with them in the future (Dobosz, 2003) since it uncovers the meaning participants make of their experiences and the context in which they live (Ortiz, 2003, p. 37).

The ethnographic interview or the in-depth interview has two major benefits, according to Don W. Stacks (2011, p. 174): it allows the interviewer to obtain an

understanding of not only the problem being researched, but also the person being interviewed; it also allows for introspection on the part of the interviewee and yet can still provide the interviewer control over the type of questions asked and the order of these questions. One of the disadvantages of ethnographic interviews is that it may fail if the interviewer is more concerned with self-aggrandisement than listening to what the respondent has to say; another problem lies when ethnography is part of a designed project, in which the interviewer's job is to solve problems and offer solutions. The push to solve design problems may conflict with taking the time to fully appreciate the nature of the problem (Blomberg et al., 1993, p. 137). Conducting ethnographic interviews has an additional disadvantage in that the interviews are typically conducted with a non-random sample, as each respondent may answer a slightly different version of a question (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006); moreover, an ethnographic interview is less standardised than other data collection methods, consequently, it:

may not reveal the respondents' assumptions or values, as these are taken for granted, or lie outside the interviewees' awareness Dobosz (2003, p. 290).

Finally, the major disadvantage of ethnographic interview includes the high cost in terms of both monetary outlay and time expended, particularly if a design requires hiring interviewers, training, and paying for their time and travel, not forgetting that recording, transcribing and coding data are also time-consuming, complex and often protracted (Goodman, 2001, p. 311).

The definition and purposes, including the advantages and disadvantages of the interview method have been considered in this study, and the research methodology includes face-to-face and Skype interviews. Face-to-face interviews were considered to be suitable for studying a small group of participants, and Skype interviews the most appropriate method for speaking to online journalists in Lebanon¹².

¹² The researcher has not lived in Lebanon since 2009 therefore interviews were subsequently conducted via *Skype*.

The findings from interviews were intended to enhance the information from participant observations, as previously mentioned, and the interview data gained from editors and an IT manager provided details on the rationale and processes of news production that surround, select and shape news diffusion in print and online editions. The interviews with online journalists helped to obtain information on their work routines, sources and deadlines, reflecting the role of print and electronic newspapers at the time of this study, which could be useful for further study of the development of online newspapers in Lebanon. This thesis conducted both face-to-face and Skype semi-structured qualitative interviews by using open-ended questions with two groups of Lebanese participants between 2008 and 2014.

4.4.3. Application to Research

Ethnographic interviews were applicable to this research in many ways:

- (i) they created a perfect start in the process of establishing a relationship between the writer, as a researcher, and the editors, journalists and staff working in online newspapers. The casual conversations that we had, formed the main sources of information and data collected; although the interviews conducted face-to-face and via Skype were semi-structured, the ethnographic interviews helped in developing a strong rapport with the interviewees, and offered a great opportunity to further investigate the Lebanese online industry.
- (ii) they helped the researcher to understand not only the current situation of the online newspapers, but also the obstacles they were (and are) encountering.; they also gave the researcher a clearer idea of the difficulties the interviewees were facing; by spending some quality time on all three online newspapers, while conducting ethnographic interviews and observations, clarified the role each newspaper was (and is) playing in the media market.

4.4.4. Interview Participants

Four print and online editors and one IT manager were chosen by purposive sampling, based on their roles as decision-makers in the newspaper production

process; in addition, a group of six online journalists were also selected under the same method, in consideration of their important roles in creating the interactive features of online newspapers: their opinions and information were, therefore, more relevant to the news production process of both print and electronic newspapers, regarding the data on the development of online newspapers in Lebanon.

It should be noted, however, that ethnographic interviews for this thesis were conducted in two stages, because of the major changes that the Lebanese online newspapers were experiencing in 2011. The first stage of the study was in 2008 when the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with three editors-in-chief, an online journalist, an assistant editor and an IT manager of the print and online newspapers, *Annahar*, *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra* followed by a second stage in 2014, when the researcher conducted interviews via Skype with four online journalists and an online editor-in-chief. Lists of names, dates and time slots of interviews are shown in tables 4.5 and 4.6 below.

Name of Interviewee	Job Title/ Newspaper
Wadih Tueni	IT manager / <i>Annaharonline</i>
Ghassan Hajjar	Editor-in-chief / <i>Annahar</i> print
Najwa Maroun	Editor-in-chief / <i>Aldiyar</i> print
Joseph Semaan	Editor-in-chief / <i>Elnashra</i>
Hussein Assy	Assistant editor / <i>Elnashra</i>
Ziad Saadeh	Online journalist / <i>Elnashra</i>

Table 4.5: List of the First Group of Interviews in 2008

Name of Interviewee	Job Title/ Newspaper
Diana Sakini	Online Journalist / <i>Annaharonline</i>
Reine Abou Moussa	Online Journalist / <i>Annaharonline</i>
Fady Chami	Editor-in-chief / <i>Aldiyaronline</i>
Raja Mouhtar	Online Journalist / <i>Aldiyaronline</i>
Mohammad Al Hani	Online Journalist / <i>Aldiyaronline</i>

Table 4.6: List of the Second Group of Interviews in 2014

It is important to mention here that *Annaharonline* IT manager, Wadih Tueni, and *Elnashra's* editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, were also interviewed in 2014 via

telephone, for updates on the changes that their online newspapers had experienced since the last interview in 2008.

4.4.5. Interviews Sites and Dates

The face-to-face interviews were conducted at the same locations as the ethnographic observations for three months, from September to November 2008, in Beirut, as detailed in table 4.7 below. The second group of interviews took place via Skype between Lebanon (the location of the newspapers) and Canada (the location of the researcher) as presented in table 4.8.

Name of participant	Interview site	Date / Time slot of Interview
Wadih Tueni	<i>Annahar</i> Building, Martyr Square, Beirut, Lebanon	7 October 2008 at 1 p.m.
Ghassan Hajjar	<i>Annahar</i> Building, Martyr Square, Beirut, Lebanon	9 October 2008 at 12 noon
Najwa Maroun	<i>Al Nahda</i> Bldg, Yarzeh, Baabda, Lebanon	4 November 2008 at 3 p.m.
Joseph Semaan	<i>Furn el Shebbak</i> , Ain El-Remmaneh, Beirut, Lebanon	8 September 2008 at 4 p.m.
Hussein Assy	<i>Furn el Shebbak</i> , Ain El-Remmaneh, Beirut, Lebanon	8 September 2008 at 6 p.m.
Ziad Saadeh	<i>Furn el Shebbak</i> , Ain El-Remmaneh, Beirut, Lebanon	9 September 2008 at 11 a.m.

Table 4.7: List of the First Group of Participants with Research Sites and Dates of Interviews

Name of participant	Interview site	Date / Time slot of Interview (Canadian Time Zone)
Diana Sakini	Skype Interview (Lebanon-Canada)	19 May 2014 at 3 p.m.
Reine Abou Moussa	Skype Interview (Lebanon-Canada)	20 May 2014 at 4 p.m.
Fady Chami	Skype Interview (Lebanon- Canada)	20 March 2014 at 2 p.m.
Raja Mouhtar	Skype Interview (Lebanon- Canada)	27 May 2014 at 1 p.m.
Mohammad Al Hani	Skype Interview (Lebanon- Canada)	27 May 2014 at 2 p.m.

Table 4.8: List of the Second Group of Participants with Research Sites and Dates of Interviews

4.4.6. Methods of Data Collection for Interviews

The purpose of interviews was to establish more details of the newspaper samples' production processes, including information about their history, rationale and development. This thesis performed three stages of data collection for interviews, which included designing, interviewing, transcribing and translating. The following will examine each step with strategies for the implementation of interviews.

4.4.6.1. Designing

A set of questions was designed to guide the researcher before conducting the interviews. The aim was to find out as much information as possible about the newspaper production, newsroom communication routines and the role of an online journalist in Lebanon, through these questions. The interview guide helped the researcher to focus on the important issues and topics that would support the research findings, provide a framework and sequence for the questions, and maintain some consistency across interviews, when different responses were given.

The interview questions for editors and IT manager in this research were mainly formulated to gain more details about their rationale, website design, policy, aims for the launching of an online version, criteria for choosing their journalists, role of online journalists, their targeted audiences, problems they would (or are) facing and their relationship with the print newspaper, and so on (see Appendix A for a full list of the questions).

Another twenty open-ended questions were designed for the online journalists to discover the role, work routine, deadlines, news selection, source and relationship with other print journalists, and so on (see Appendix B for a full list of the questions).

The interviews with online journalists were conducted after the researcher contacted them via telephone, requesting their cooperation, explaining the aim of

the study, discussing specific issues to be addressed during the interview, and setting a suitable date to speak to them through Skype. These Skype interviews were between Canada and the participants in Beirut, Lebanon, and were recorded in brief notes.

4.4.6.2. Interviewing

The face-to-face and Skype interviews consisted of three main parts. Each interview began by introducing the researcher and the study, in order to establish an initial relationship with the participant. The researcher steered the conversation towards the participants' replies to the questions, until they had all been explored. The interview process ended, after the participants were asked whether they would like to add anything else in relation to the study.

4.4.6.3. Transcribing and Translating

The interview transcripts were translated from Arabic to English, as the field study was conducted in Lebanon where Arabic is the *lingua franca*. The interviews were originally led in English, but some online journalists and editors-in-chief were not sufficiently familiar with the language, and were unable to freely express themselves, consequently, it was decided that the interviews should be conducted in the Arabic language. The problem did not only lie with the participants: the researcher also found some of the terminology difficult to translate into Arabic (and vice versa), since some of the English terms do not exist *per se* in the Arabic vocabulary: interactivity, multimedia, and so on.

4.4.7. Analysis of Interviews

The important step of data analysis involved determining the meaning of the information gathered from interviews, in relation to the purpose of the study. The transcripts of interview data were created and verified, followed by applying the qualitative method to the data by reviewing, indicating, summarising and grouping the important information related to the study, and the answers to the research questions. The findings were divided into three sections for the analysis: the

rationale for launching an online newspaper version, newsroom communication routines and production process, and the journalists' role, deadlines, beat system, source of news and employment criteria.

4.4.8. Ethical Issues in Ethnographic Interview

Regarding the ethical issues of the study, contact with the proposed participants was made, before the interviews were conducted. The researcher communicated with the two groups of interview samples to introduce the study, and to obtain their consent to participate. A conversation followed with each participant who had accepted to take part in this study, suggestions made for the time and venue for the interviews, and what specific issues would be discussed. The ethical issue of respecting the interview participants' privacy was also considered; all participants agreed that their full names could appear in the research.

Newspaper content analysis of three newspaper samples was carried out, after gathering the data from ethnographic observations and interviews. The next section describes the third research method of the study: newspaper content analysis.

4.5. Online Newspaper Content Analysis

The focus of this media research is on online newspapers, particularly in Lebanon, and involves studying technology that is constantly moving forward. Content analysis was employed to analyse the character and location of interactive features that are shaped and presented by the production process, as it is an efficient way to keep up with the technology (Li, 2006). This thesis does not aim to study the technology itself, however, but instead, to look at the context of technology by analysing its use in online newspapers, therefore, content analysis is conducted to answer the research questions: 'how are online Lebanese newspapers adopting and adapting to new technologies?' and 'to what extent did the studied electronic newspapers in Lebanon use the interactive elements, particularly comments on the news and multimedia?'

Wimmer and Dominick (2006, p. 150) indicate that content analysis is a specific research approach used frequently in all areas of the media, because it is an efficient way of investigating the content of the media.

This research, therefore, conducted content analysis in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The quantitative analysis will explore the amount, frequency and proportions of interactive features in three Lebanese online newspaper samples; the qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, will investigate the type, content, location, priority and news value of interactive feature samples. The details of newspaper content analysis will be outlined under six headings: rationale and purposes of content analysis, advantages and disadvantages, samples and units, the design, recording forms, method of data collection, and data analysis procedure.

4.5.1. Definition and Purposes of Content Analysis

Content analysis is a popular research method that is frequently used in all areas of the media. In a study conducted in 1997, Riffe and Freitage found that about 25% of the 1977 full-length research articles published in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, from 1971 until 1995 was content analysis. *Communication Abstracts* listed more than 90 content analysis studies for 1999 and 2000, indicating that it is still a favoured research technique for media studies (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p. 140).

Examples of new-media studies conducting content analysis include Singer's (2001) study on the changes in the newspapers' online gatekeeping role, by conducting the analysis of six newspapers and their websites in Colorado, USA; moreover, Li (1998) studied the design of the webpage and news-retrieval efficiency by analysing the content of five U.S. Internet newspapers.

The first concise presentation, however, of the conceptual and methodological developments under the new term 'content analysis' appeared in a 1948 mimeographed text entitled *The Analysis of Communication Content*, authored by Berelson and Lazarsfeld; the research was later published as Berelson's *Content*

Analysis in Communication Research (1952). No matter how ancient the roots of content analysis were, today, it is significantly different in aims and method from that of the past (Krippendorff, 2004, p. xvii).

Michael Walizer and Paul Wienir (1978) defined content analysis as any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information; on the other hand, Kerlinger Fred Nicholas and Lee Howard Bing (2000) described content analysis as a method of studying and analysing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables; therefore, the content analysis method is, by definition, a quantitative approach. As Hansen et al. (1998, p. 95) also explained, the purpose of this method of analysis is to identify and count the occurrence of specific characteristics or dimensions of text, in order to be able to say something about the messages, images, their representation wider social significance. Stempel (2003, p. 210) concluded that the key to understanding content analysis and performing it competently, lies in understanding the meaning of objective, systematic, quantitative and manifest content. Stempel (2003, pp. 209-210) also suggests that communication research can reach its full potential only if it can relate content to the communicator, audience and effect; it cannot do that without definitive information about content, and thus analytical method has frequently been used in mass communication research.

Finally, content analysis should be 'objective': the researcher's personal idiosyncrasies and biases should not enter into the findings; however, perfect objectivity is seldom achieved in a content analysis - the specification of the unit of analysis and the precise makeup and definition of relevant categories are areas in which individual researchers must exercise a subjective choice (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p.140).

The analysis of the use of new technology in Lebanese online newspapers in this study explored two features: the commenting on news, and multimedia. The main focus of this thesis is on media study, and is concerned with investigating the adoption and adaptation of online newspapers to new technologies, particularly in

Lebanon; the examination and analysis of media products (newspaper content) or audience and business issues, are beyond the scope of this thesis.

The intentions of adopting the content analysis method were threefold: to explore the use of interactive features in the form of new technologies by counting their presence on the online newspaper samples; to provide information on what kinds of interactive features being used by online newspapers; and finally, to examine the use of two interactive elements, commenting on news and multimedia. It is hoped that content analysis can lead to an understanding of whether and how online newspapers in Lebanon have (or are) adopting and adapting to new technologies.

4.5.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Content Analysis

The strengths and benefits of content analysis are numerous. Daniel Riffe et al. (2005, p.38) limited it to four advantages: unobtrusive, nonreactive measurement technique - the messages are separate and apart from communicators and receivers. Armed with a strong theoretical framework, the researcher can draw conclusions from content evidence without having to gain access to communicators, who may be unwilling or unable to directly examined directly; because content often has a life beyond its production and consumption, longitudinal studies are possible, using archived materials that may outlive the communicators, their audiences, or the events described in the communication content; quantification or measurement by coding teams, permits reduction to numbers of large amounts of information or data that would be logistically impossible for close qualitative analysis, and lastly, content analysis is virtually unlimited in its applicability to a variety of questions important to many disciplines and fields, because of the centrality of communication in human affairs.

The major advantages of this method exist in its ability to objectively and reliably describe a message, or group of messages, and its application to advance statistical analyses:

it also provides both logical and statistical bases for understanding how messages are created. Finally, content analysis focuses on the messages or communications actually produced in practice and in that regard may be considered a major methodological tool that bridges research methods (Stacks, 2011, p. 120);

according to Wimmer, Rogers and Dominick (2006, p. 144), content analysis alone cannot serve as either the basis for making statements about the effects of content on an audience, or as the sole source for claims about media effects - the findings of a particular content analysis are limited to the framework of the categories and the definitions used in that analysis; different research may use various definitions and category systems to measure a single concept, which explains why researchers who use various measurement tools, naturally arrive at different conclusions.

Another limitation of content analysis is the lack of messages relevant to the research; many topics receive little exposure in the mass media; moreover, sometimes researchers interested in such topics, must be prepared to examine a large body of media content to find sufficient quantities for analysis. Finally:

content analysis is frequently time-consuming and expensive. The task of examining and categorizing large volumes of content is often laborious and tedious (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, pp. 144-145);

therefore, quantitative content analysis was mainly used in this study, in order to investigate the amount and proportions of interactive features in online newspaper samples; in addition, quantitative content analysis was processed by classifying aspects of the interactive features of online newspapers into predetermined categories, and counting the frequency with which different types of interactivity occurred, and the qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the interactive features, in terms of their content, news value, location and the genre of news that they accompany; most importantly, the qualitative and quantitative content analysis answers the research questions: how are online Lebanese newspapers adopting and adapting to new technologies?', and 'to what extent did the studied electronic newspapers in Lebanon use the interactive elements, particularly comments on the news and multimedia features?'

4.5.3. Samples and Units of Content Analysis

Annaharonline and *Aldiyaronline* were selected from around eleven Arabic Lebanese online newspapers¹³ that descended from print parents, by purposive sampling; moreover, *Elnashra* born-on-the-web newspaper was selected from approximately seventy Lebanese born-on-the-web newspapers that do not have any print or broadcast media genesis (<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/lebanon.htm>). Purposive sampling was applied for the selection of samples scheme, with the aim of analysing the specific case of online Lebanese newspapers that descend from print versions, as well as those that were born-on-the-web. These samples were chosen, based on the following seven factors: (i) the online versions that descend from print copies present the most famous national newspapers in Lebanon; (ii) they are historically among the oldest; (iii) they have an electronic version that is completed and updated daily; (iv) they are in the top five of the seven favourite newspaper websites in Lebanon (*Arab Media Outlook* (2009-2013) and the *Nielsen Company*); (v) the born-on-the web newspaper is one of the famous and most reliable news website in Lebanon; (vi) the born-on-the-web newspaper is the fifth most visited news website (*Arab Media Outlook* (2009-2013) and the *Nielsen Company*); and (vii) all three online samples are published in the Arabic language.

The online versions of the three newspaper samples were visited more than once a day during the study period. The data collection period consisted of one month (21 March to 22 April 2014), and the unit of analysis for quantitative content analysis in this study was one-day's content of each print and electronic newspaper; according to Schultz (2000, p. 147), one-day's content should be sufficient to catch the interactivity level of the site, as these features of newspaper websites are fairly constant. The categorisation of interactivity used is based on the typologies suggested by Li (1998), Boczkowski (2004) and Jankowski and Selin (2000), and

¹³ The eleven Lebanese print newspapers that have an online version are: *Annahar*, *Aldiyar*, *Al Shariq*, *Al Mustaqbal*, *Al Akhbar*, *Al Bayraq*, *Al Joumhouriya*, *Al Balad*, *Al Anwar*, *Assafir* and *Al Liwaa*; for a complete list of born-on-the-web political newspapers in Lebanon, see Appendix C.

these categories range from graphics added to the story, E-mail link to the editorial board or author, 'Link' relevant to the story added, discussion forum on the subject of the article, comments on the article, and so on¹⁴.

The possibility of being able to use interactive features on their webpages is one of the more attractive and beneficial aspects of online newspapers, compared to print editions; therefore, by using the content analysis method, this study investigates the feature of commenting on news as a human (user-to user interactivity) and the use of multimedia as a medium (user-to-system interactivity) in the three studied Lebanese online newspapers, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

4.5.4. Content Analysis Recording Forms

The content analysis began at 9 a.m. on 21 March and ended at 9 p.m. on 22 April 2014. The content of the online version of each of the three Lebanese newspapers was coded on each day of the one-month period, and the analysis was mainly made on all the current stories that were published on the front pages, and some stories from the inside pages of the online newspapers. Two recording forms were designed, as previously stated, before conducting content analysis, as instruments to record the data from newspaper content. These recording forms provided the data that measured the quantity, location and use of interactive features, mainly commenting on news and multimedia, on the websites.

The first recording form was designed to measure the existence of interactive features in the three online newspapers which the researcher visited, in order to record the presence of the following 26 interactive features based on the typologies suggested by Li (1998), Boczkowski (2004) and Jankowski and Selm (2000)¹⁵.

The components of interactive elements defined in this study, as previously mentioned, included: commenting on news and the use of multimedia. These two interactive features were chosen for the following reasons: although two newspaper samples have the 'commenting on news' feature, the feature has been

¹⁴ See Appendix D for a full list of the categories

¹⁵ See Appendix E for a sample of the recording form

used, adapted and adopted differently; the multimedia option is a common interactive feature in all three newspapers; while the commenting on news is between human beings, the use of multimedia is a medium for user-to-system interactivity.

The second recording form was designed to measure the quantity and quality of commenting on news and the use of multimedia offered by each online newspaper sample. It showed how many news items had comments, the number and categories of comments and genre of the news with comments (see below for further details); in addition, it analysed the number of news items with multimedia, kind of multimedia used, source of multimedia, its location and added value¹⁶.

4.5.5. Methods of Recording

The study took place every Monday to Sunday over four weeks, in order to examine the use of commenting on news and multimedia features on three online Lebanese newspapers. The data collection for commenting on news was based on both quantitative and qualitative content analysis of four units: the amount of news uploaded on the front page of the online newspapers that included comments; the amount of comments written on the news; the genre of the news which had the highest number of comments (for example: political, social, economic, international, art) and finally, the categories of the comments (for example: vague, racist, anonymous, critical, attacks on the newspaper and on the journalist, praise for the newspaper, journalist, and so on.

The data collection for the use of multimedia is based on both quantitative and qualitative content analysis of six units: the number of news items with multimedia features; the kind of multimedia used (video, sound, static and motion pictures, slideshow); the significance of the multimedia (short, long, extracted from another website, with text, without text); the location (located at the top of the news item, at the end, in the middle of the page); the source (YouTube, online journalist,

¹⁶ See Appendix F for a sample of the recording form for the commenting on news and multimedia features

another news agency); and finally, the added value (new information added to the text includes the same information used in the story, is more reliable, has more effect on the reader and explains the news in more depth).

The electronic versions of the selected newspapers were downloaded every morning on a computer terminal, for the stated period. The data recording processes took place at the end of each day, and on the final day, the data of the whole month was collected and analysed as described below.

4.5.6. Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analysed by coding and counting the numbers and frequency of interactive features. Hansen et al. (1998, p. 121) indicated that where content analysis is extremely simple and rudimentary, it may be possible to analyse the result 'by hand'. The frequency with which different specified dimensions occur can be determined by looking through the completed coding schedules, and counting up the number of times each dimension has been recorded; since the analysis of this study does not involve any complex results, the main aim of the study was to explore the proportion and characteristics of multimedia features in online newspapers.

The qualitative data analysis consisted of extensive reading, sorting, comparisons and summarising of the material. Qualitative analysis can be based on the twenty six interactive features, according to the typologies suggested by Li (1998), Boczkowski (2004) and Jankowski and Selm (2000); however, as stated previously, the analysis of newspaper interactive options in this study explored only two of those features: the news commentary and multimedia usage. The quantitative and qualitative content analysis data of newspaper samples will be displayed and described in Chapter Seven. The results from both content analysis - qualitative and quantitative, reflected the way Lebanese online newspapers adopted and adapted to new technologies.

4.6. Chapter Summary

This research was conducted by utilising a multiple method of research design to give added support to the confidence of the study's findings; according to Maykut and Morehouse (cited in Wimmer and Dominick, 2006), one of the four factors that help build credibility in a qualitative research project is 'multiple methods of data collection'. The ethnographic observations provided information on the print and electronic newspapers' production processes, news communication routines and history and development of the newspaper, and the interviews with the editors-in-chief and online journalists of the newspaper samples provided data on the rationale of launching an online newspaper, the employment criteria, and the role of online journalists, the work routines, and the deadlines. The results of content analysis on the use of interactive features helped to investigate the adoption and adaption of new technologies in the three Lebanese online samples. Finally, the ethnographic observations and interviews sought a more accurate content analysis conclusion and more specific information about online newspapers in Lebanon.

Ethnographic observations, interviews and content analysis were conducted at different periods, because the content analysis design was partly based on the information from the ethnographic observations, and on the interviews. The research methods were conducted over three different time periods: the ethnographic observation was conducted in 2008, while the ethnographic interviews took place over two time periods - from September to November 2008, and from March to May 2014. The final method was conducted in March and April 2014 through the analysis of the newspapers' interactive features. The interview samples consisted of two groups of participants: three editors-in-chief, an online journalist, an assistant editor, and an IT manager in the first group. The second group consisted of four online journalists and an editor-in-chief. The units of content analysis study were 'commenting on news' and the use of multimedia in each online edition of the three newspaper samples.

The analysis of newspaper content, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, was conducted in order to explore the use of new technologies in online newspapers. The findings from content analysis showed the adoption and adaptation of two interactive features in three online newspapers in Lebanon: studies made on two online newspapers descending from a print version, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, examined the similarities and differences in terms of their production of news and use of interactive features. The results of content analysis of interactive options were expected to identify the adaption and adoption to new technologies. The ethnographic observations and interviews sought more specific information on the rationale, development and production processes of online newspapers in Lebanon. The findings of the study will be presented and analysed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

The combination of three research methods helped to provide information on the adoption and adaptation to new technologies in terms of its rationale, production processes and use of interactive features. The next chapter sets the background for the case study, by discussing the Lebanese newspapers in the Internet era.

Chapter Five: Background of the Case Studies: Newspapers in Lebanon in the Internet Age

5.1. Introduction

It can be safely argued that the Internet has become an indispensable part of the effective and successful existence of radio, television, newspaper and magazines: the old mass media have continued to enhance their relevance by hooking up to the Internet. They have realised that no media outlet can survive without supporting itself with an online version of its product; therefore, the Internet can be aptly called not merely a mass medium but also the medium of the mass media, because it is a channel through which the other media enhance their relevance or overcome their own limitations of frequencies, circulation or transiency. The contents of other media: radio, TV, books, magazines, and newspapers are relayed to a wider audience through the Internet (Ohiagu, 2011, pp. 225-232).

This chapter examines the broad context of, and relevant information about, mass media in Lebanon, and in particular, print newspapers in the Internet era. It starts by shedding light on the uniqueness of Lebanon, the country where this research was conducted; and it reviews the current Lebanese mass media landscape, which will provide a macro-picture of the media context in which online newspapers were launched. This chapter investigates the birth and development of Lebanese print and online newspapers, with a short history of the advent of the Internet in Lebanon. The final section of this chapter presents the profiles of the three Lebanese newspapers, which will set the background of the case study and the empirical component of this research. The data in this chapter are presented in five sections: Lebanon as a unique precarious region; the Lebanese media landscape, in particular, its political confessionalism, ownership, freedom of speech and censorship; the history and development of the Lebanese print newspapers; the birth and development of online newspapers in Lebanon; and finally, the profiles of the study samples.

In order to better understand the landscape of Lebanon's media sector, especially the birth of the Lebanese online newspapers, it is necessary to first understand the nature of the Lebanese state that led to the formation of a 'unique' yet a 'precarious' country in the region.

5.2. Lebanon: A Unique yet Precarious Country

Lebanon is considered to be a 'unique' country because of its cultural diversity, educational system, media industry and geographical location. Originally home to the Phoenicians, and then subsequently conquered and occupied by the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Ottomans and the French, the Lebanese culture has, over the millennia evolved by borrowing from all of these groups (Stokes, p. 406). Many Lebanese speak, write and read French and English fluently, in addition to Arabic. The official Lebanese school curriculum requires students to master the two European languages, and, as a result of the history of the language use in Lebanon, most Lebanese use Arabic, French and English interchangeably in their daily conversations (McKenzie, 2006, p. 67); moreover, since Armenians form around 5% of the Lebanese population (Antelava, 2009), the Armenian language is commonly heard in certain Lebanese areas such as Burj Hammoud and Anjar; they also have their own daily newspaper, *Aztag*.

Lebanon is 'unique' as far as its education system is concerned. Listed in the 'Global Information Technology Report by the World Economic Forum' in 2013¹⁷, Lebanon was ranked globally as the 10th best for the quality of education (Bilbao-Osorio et al., 2013, p. 213); according to the UNESCO EFA (Education for All) Global Monitoring Report (2008)¹⁸, 92% of the Lebanese in 2005 had access to primary education. The total youth literacy rate (15-24 years) was 96% in 2002; the adult literacy rate (15 years and over) was 89.6 % in 2007, and in the higher education sphere Lebanon has 41 nationally accredited universities, several of which

¹⁷<http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-information-technology-report-2013> [retrieved 21 August 2014]

¹⁸<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/> [retrieved 21 August 2014]

are internationally recognised¹⁹. Most universities in Lebanon offer a programme of study for a journalism degree. Every year, around 1,000 students enrol in the mass media programme in the Lebanese University alone (the only state university in Lebanon)²⁰. Recently, the Communication Arts programmes in the Lebanese universities have become further advanced with the expansion and development of the world reality and with the technological evolution; some universities have also started teaching online journalism courses²¹.

Over the past decades, Lebanon has developed one of the most prominent media sectors in the Middle East (Soueid et al., 2014, p.12) and as such, the media industry has increasingly become an important contributor to the economy, accounting for at least 2.5% of Lebanon's GDP, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization (2013)²². The turnover of this industry stood at around 1 billion dollars, with a value added of around 55.3 %. Based on most recent estimates, there are around 400 companies working in the sector, employing around 2.11 % of the Lebanese labour force (Media Factbook, 2013, p. 4).

An effective education system, including mastering three languages, has helped the Lebanese in general, and the youth in particular, to adapt to new technologies such as surfing the Internet for news. The support and right education tools and skills offered to journalists have played a major role in effectively developing the Lebanese media industry. Lebanon's destiny, however, has been determined in large part by its location on the world map. A small area of land (10,452 square kilometres) on the edge of Asia, Lebanon is situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, surrounded by countries such as Syria, Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Cyprus and the Gulf countries. This 'unique' location served as

¹⁹ Infopro Management, 'Lebanon Opportunities – Business Information' [retrieved 25 August 2014]. See also Lebanese Directory of Higher Education 'Decrees' [retrieved 25 August 2014]

²⁰ http://www.journalismnetwork.eu/index.php/en/country_profiles/lebanon/ [retrieved 1 September 2014]

²¹ The American University of Beirut (AUB) have started teaching Online Journalism courses: http://www.aub.edu.lb/rep/rep_home/Pages/journalism.aspx [retrieved 1 September 2014] and the Lebanese American University (LAU): <http://sas.lau.edu.lb/communication-arts/programs/ba-communication-arts.php> [retrieved 1 September 2014]

²² http://www.wipo.int/econ_stat/en/economics/wipr/ [retrieved 1 September 2014]

a link between the East and the West, specifically Europe, India, East Asia and Africa (McKenzie, 2006, p. 66).

Lebanon's geographical position on the Mediterranean Sea (Mediterranean: 'centre of the world'), on the borders of Europe and the Middle East, between historic Islamic and Christian cultures, has meant that 'Lebanon has never been fully integrated into either Europe or the Arab world' (Malaspina, 2009, p. 8), nor has it been able to isolate itself from the various conflicts in the stormy Middle East, particularly in the last century. To the North and East of Lebanon lies Syria, a large Arab state which has been engaged in a civil war since March 2011²³. South of the Lebanese border lies Palestine: a territory in conflict with Israel since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948²⁴. The Palestinians were forced to flee their homes, and many have settled in refugee camps in Lebanon, as displaced non-citizens, for decades (Malaspina, 2009, p.14). The recent number of Syrian refugees joining the Palestinian ones has created a source of great tension in the country, contributing to its political and economic instability (Malaspina, 2009, p. 15).

Lebanon has a population of around 4 million²⁵, 18 officially recognised religious confessions²⁶, more than 30 active political parties²⁷ and 14 daily newspapers in four languages²⁸. Lebanon's 'uniqueness' includes being the only Arab country with a Muslim majority²⁹ led by a Christian president. Lebanon has the largest

²³ CBBC Newsround , December 12, 2013, available at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/16979186> [retrieved 1 September 1, 2014]

²⁴ History of the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict, available at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Israeli%E2%80%93Palestinian_conflict [retrieved 1 September 2014]

²⁵ The Lebanese population in 2013, according to the CIA World Factbook is 4,131,583 [Source: MSI, 2014, p. 2]

²⁶ The 18 Lebanese confessions are: Shia, Sunni, Druze, Isma'elite, Alawite or Nusayri, Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Armenian, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian, Copt and Protestant, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_religion_in_Lebanon [retrieved 2 September 2014]

²⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Lebanon [retrieved 2 September 2014]

²⁸ <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/lebanon.htm> [retrieved 24 August 2014]

²⁹ According to MSI Report (2014, p. 2), Lebanese population is formed of 59.7 % Muslims, 39% Christians and 1.3% others.

proportion of Christians in the Arab world, especially with the on-going war in Syria and Iraq, and the mass migration of Christians from their villages. Roger Hardy, the BBC Middle East analyst, wrote in 2007 that ‘Lebanon is the most politically complex and religiously divided country in the Middle East, which is what makes it such a potentially explosive factor in an unstable region’ (Hardy, 2007).

Throughout its history, Lebanon has, and is still, suffering from wars, occupations and political turmoil, especially over the last four decades. Various internal tensions inherent in the Lebanese political system and multiple regional developments contributed to 15 years of civil war from 1975 to 1990 followed by 15 years of Syrian occupation (Khalidi 1979; Salibi 1976; Petran 1987). Lebanon was invaded by Israel in 1982, which remained in the country until 2000, when it withdrew its troops³⁰. Another event that aggravated Lebanon’s political scene was the assassination of Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, on 14 February 2005³¹. The assassination divided the Lebanese political parties: those that accused Syria of the assassination (March 14 Alliance)³² and those that absolved Syria (March 8 Alliance)³³. This state of affairs attracted the intervention of several foreign actors including the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia, all of which supported the anti-Syrian government, headed by Hariri’s son, Saad. A war broke out between Israel and *Hezbollah* (a Lebanese political militia group), lasting 34 days and resulting in high civilian casualties and damage to Lebanon’s infrastructure³⁴.

³⁰ Israel currently occupies large parts of southern Lebanon, namely ‘Shebba and Mazareh Shebaa’ R. O. Freedman, 2002. *The Middle East enters the twenty first century*, Florida: University Press of Florida, p. 220

³¹ <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/79CD8AAA858FDD2D85256FD500536047> [retrieved 25 August 2014]

³² The March 14 Alliance (تحالف 14 آذار), named after the date of the Cedar Revolution, is a coalition of political parties and independents in Lebanon formed in 2005, united by their anti-Syrian regime stance and their opposition to the pro-Syrian March 8 Alliance party. It is led by MP Saad Hariri, younger son of Rafik Hariri, the assassinated former prime minister of Lebanon, as well as other figures such as Amine Gemayel, president of the Kataeb Party, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_14_Alliance [retrieved 25 August 2014]

³³ The name dates back to 8 March 2005 when different parties called for a mass demonstration in downtown Beirut in response to the Cedar Revolution, available at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_8_Alliance#cite_note-tds10- [retrieved 25 August 2014]

³⁴ US-Israeli ‘new Middle East’ plan derailed, available at: <http://www.socialismtoday.org/103/israel.html> [retrieved 25 August 2014]

The year 2006 witnessed the international tribunal over Hariri's assassination, the constant Sunni-Shi'ite clashes in various parts of Lebanon, and the assassination of political and security figures³⁵. In 2007, fighting broke out between *Fatah al-Islam*, an Islamist militant organisation³⁶, and the Lebanese Armed Forces, in Nahr Al-Bared, a UNRWA Palestinian refugee camp near Tripoli, north Lebanon. The conflict was the most severe internal fighting since Lebanon's civil war³⁷. The security situation in Lebanon deteriorated in 2013 with violence spilling over from the armed conflict in Syria. In 2014 the security situation worsened, when the Islamic State (ISIS), a militia group, captured around two dozen members of Lebanon's security forces. ISIS militants beheaded the soldiers, in retaliation to the Lebanese government's refusal to release Islamist prisoners in exchange for the hostages³⁸. Sandra Chami Kassis, a Lebanese author, suggests that: 'Lebanon is the country where everyone wants a piece, while we want peace'.

Tracking these incidents shows that from the civil war in 1975 until the date of this research (2014), Lebanon had passed through very critical, unstable political situations which have had a direct negative impact on its economy. According to Ghazi (1997), 'as the Lebanese state fragmented, so did the national economy, too. Many observers have argued that because of this fragmentation, there is no one economy in Lebanon, but several'. The Lebanese economic policy has resulted in a very high level of public debt and large external financing requirements (Ghazi, 1997). The 2013 public debt exceeded 152.03% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), ranking fourth highest in the world as a percentage of GDP (the World Bank, 2013). The Daily Star wrote that exorbitant debt levels have 'slowed down the economy and reduced the government's spending on essential development projects' (*The Daily Star*, 2004). The Lebanese economy is service-oriented which depends mainly on banking and tourism; however, due to the current safety and security concerns,

³⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14649284> , [retrieved 25 August 2014]

³⁶ http://archive.adl.org/main_terrorism/fatah_al_islam.html#.VFo4ljSUc2Y [retrieved 26 August 2014]

³⁷ http://www.dailyweeke.com/keywords/index.php?title=2007_Lebanon_conflict&oldid=1485073 [retrieved 26 August 2014]

³⁸ <http://hotair.com/archives/2014/09/08/lebanon-expects-soldiers-captured-by-isis-to-be-beheaded/> [retrieved 27 August 2014]

many countries are urging their citizens to avoid travelling to Lebanon (for example USA, <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings/lebanon-travel-warning.html> (retrieved on August 27, 2014)). This not only had a negative impact on the tourism sector, it also affected the development of the Lebanese economy³⁹, including Lebanese mass media: Lebanese newspapers were struggling to survive in a very competitive world. This explains the main argument of this research that, although most editors-in-chief were aware of the importance of new technologies, they were late in adopting and adapting to them, due to the country's unstable political and economic situation. This was also reflected in the Lebanese media landscape, discussed in the following section.

5.3. The Lebanese Media Landscape

This section reviews Lebanon's mass media *in toto*, before looking exclusively at the history and development of print newspapers in Lebanon, in the next section. The information will offer a macro-picture of the Lebanese mass media system, in an attempt to examine the main topic of this research: the adoption and adaptation of new technologies in Lebanese online newspapers.

Lebanon's media sector has long been regarded as a 'unique' phenomenon in the Middle East. Lebanon, a country of four million people, has about 14 privately owned daily newspapers⁴⁰ which are published in four languages: Arabic, English, French and Armenian⁴¹; 1 state-owned, and 27 private radio stations; 1 state-owned, and 7 private television stations⁴²; and more than 80 online newspapers⁴³; moreover, Lebanon produces about half of the print publications in the Middle East (Soueid et al., 2014, p.21). This considerable variety of media production

³⁹ Kasbar T., 18 May 2014, 'Syria war, refugees add to Lebanon's economic crisis', available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/05/lebanon-syria-conflict-refugees-economy-challenges-state.html#> [retrieved 30 August 2014]

⁴⁰ The Arabic daily newspapers in Lebanon are: *Annahar*, *Aldiyar*, *Al-Shariq*, *Al- Mustaqbal*, *Al-Akhbar*, *Al-Bayraq*, *Al-Joumhouriya*, *Al-Balad*, *Al-Anwar*, *Assafir* and *Al-Liwaa*, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_Lebanon [retrieved 3 September 2014]

⁴¹ In English: *The Daily Star*. In French: *L'Orient Le Jour*. In Armenian : *Aztag*

⁴² Private television stations are: Future TV, Al-Manar TV, MTV, NBN, Orange TV, New TV and LBCI, and one state-owned, Tele-Liban, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_in_Lebanon [retrieved 5 September 2014]

⁴³ <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/lebanon.htm> [retrieved 5 September 2014]

reflects the pluralism and diversity of the Lebanese society, and Lebanon's print newspapers, served as a platform for a multitude of voices and opinions.

Historically, Lebanon was the first Arab country to entertain mass media and permit private radio and television stations⁴⁴. This important news sector called for independence and political freedom from foreign interference (successive occupiers). The country's 'liberal' media sector, as well as the minimal restrictions on publishing and broadcasting activities (compared to other Arab countries, such as Syria where its tightly-controlled media system prohibits it from broadcasting films or shows that discuss some social taboo topics, such as the HIV/AIDS and homosexuality⁴⁵) have gained it the popularity for hosting prominent television satellite channels and major television programmes for regional broadcasting (Soueid et al., 2014, p.13).

Lebanon offers a talented and creative workforce to the entire region: each year, a substantial number of Lebanese graduates in the fields of audiovisual arts, advertising, graphic design, journalism, radio-TV, and marketing, join the media sector's labour force (Soueid et al., 2014, p.13). With the Middle Eastern media consumption expanding by an average annual rate of 22.9%, Lebanon's media market continues to provide high growth potential, especially with the considerable proportion of well-educated and skilled young people, ensures continued interest in the sector (Soueid et al., 2014, p.13). Lebanon has economically benefited from the new technological innovations by expanding its social and digital media sectors; for example, Lebanon's digital media sector is further enhanced by the rise in digital advertising. While this type of advertising only constitutes about 9.5% of total advertising expenditures, digital advertising has witnessed the highest growth over the past few years, rising by an average 77% annually during 2009-2013, to reach a value of USD 14.4 million in 2013.

⁴⁴ Kraidy M., 1999, 'State Control of Television News in 1990s Lebanon', Annenberg School for Communication: University of Pennsylvania.

⁴⁵ IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis, 2006, 'SYRIA: Private media breaks taboos, but restrictions remain', Damascus: Syria, available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/26330/syria-private-media-breaks-taboos-but-restrictions-remain> [retrieved 7 September 2014]

This signals the increasing online content creation opportunities (Soueid et al., 2014, p.20).

Most mass media in Lebanon are owned by a certain political confessionalism (Arabic: محاصصة طائفية)⁴⁶ as explained in the next section. The Lebanese mass media and journalists are currently facing censorship, lack of freedom of speech, violence, harassment, and intimidation, in spite of demanding independence from the government, foreign occupiers, and private owners.

5.3.1. Political Confessionalism

It can be argued that the media system largely reflects the social and political structures where it operates. The Lebanese political system is deeply rooted in confessionalism in which the highest positions are proportionately reserved for representatives from certain religious communities. It 'is plagued by sectarian divisions and a confessional government system; political groups often form around sects and traditional feudal leaders, almost all of whom are supported by foreign countries' (Melki et al., 2012, p. 6). According to Dima Dabbous-Sensenig (2007, p. 4) 'confessionalism in Lebanon means that a Lebanese citizen has democratic rights only in as far as this citizen belongs to a specific, recognized confession', which also indicates that those rights are directly proportional to the numerical size of the religious or confessional community to which he or she belongs - the larger the community, the greater the rights and privileges conferred to its members (Dabbous-Sensenig, 2007, p. 4).

Similar to the country's political system, 'the disorientation and fragmentation' of the media system, as described by media scholar, Nabil Dajani (2013), has often served the interests of the elites and leaders, instead of the public. The journalist, David Hirst, wrote in his book, *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East* the Lebanese media landscape reflects the political and sectarian divisions in this 'democracy of sorts' (2010).

⁴⁶ a system of government that involves a *de jure* mix of religion and politics, available at www.usip.org/publications/lebanons-confessionalism-problems-and-prospects [retrieved 10 September 2014]

A good example here is the Lebanese television stations which were licensed after the war (according to the 1994 *Lebanese Broadcast Law*⁴⁷), and represent the five major confessional groups in the country; by the same token, not all other applicants, whether they fulfilled the legal requirements or not, were given a licence (Dabbous-Sensenig, 2007, p. 4). The current Lebanese television landscape is as follows: *Future TV* is a Sunni channel, owned by the El-Hariri family and supports the Future Political Movement; *Al-Jadeed (NTV)* is another Sunni channel owned by Tahseen Khayat (a Sunni Business man who owns Tahseen Khayat Group), *Al Manar TV* is backed by Shi'ite political party Hezbollah, and *NBN* is backed by the Shi'ite parliamentary speaker and head of the Amal movement, Nabih Berri. The *OTV* is run by the Free Patriotic Movement whose leader is Maronite Michel Aoun. The *LBCI* was the media platform of the Maronite supporters of Christian Lebanese Forces and its leader, Samir Geagea and is run by Maronite Pierre El-Daher. Finally, the *MTV* is owned by El-Murr, an Orthodox family⁴⁸. The television channels in Lebanon, as can be seen from the foregoing, support and represent the agenda of a political personality or party (4 are owned by Muslims and 3 by Christians); moreover, most of them are owned, managed, or financed by local or regional powers. While this structure ensures a pluralistic press system, it transforms many of the news media into propagandists for their patrons. Persistent foreign intervention in Lebanon's domestic affairs has forged a media landscape whose nature is paradoxical.

The same political agenda reflected in traditional media also exists online; according to *Arab Media Outlook 2009–2013*⁴⁹, the top news websites in Lebanon belong to, or reflect the same political parties that own the country's traditional media. Some emerging voices, however, have carved out a space with blogs and online social networking tools. A growing community of online activists exerts some influence in the socio-political and cultural realms, especially among young

⁴⁷ http://www.elections-lebanon.org/elections/docs_6_g_4_4a_25.aspx [retrieved 28 September 2014]

⁴⁸ 'Arab Media Outlook 2011-2015', 2012, pp. 191–192, available at: <http://www.arabmediaforum.ae/userfiles/EnglishAMO.pdf> [retrieved 2 October 2014]

⁴⁹ 'Arab Media Outlook 2009-2013', 2010, pp. 150-155, available at: <https://fas.org/irp/eprint/arabmedia.pdf> [retrieved 2 October 2014]

people, but they have yet to rival the power of traditional media (Melki et al., 2012, p.20).

Both print and broadcast media in Lebanon often revert to sectarian discourse to the extent of threatening the country's political and social stability. In recurrent crises, the media become mired in political and sectarian feuds and serve as instruments of sectarian mobilisation (Kraidy and Khalil, 2007; Cochrane, 2008; Fawz, 2013; Dajani, 2013). None of the hundreds of Lebanese media institutions or outlets speak for all the Lebanese; on the contrary, each medium operates as a voice for a political or sectarian faction, reinforcing and encouraging divisions in society (Kraidy and Khalil, 2007; Cochrane, 2008; Fawz, 2013; Dajani, 2013).

5.3.2. Ownership

The media in Lebanon have not always been transparent on the question of ownership. Media ownership, as Lebanese media expert, Magda Abu Fadil (2013) maintains, is 'a contentious issue in Lebanon because full disclosure of who really has how many shares in any given organization, and what foreign interests are involved, are hard to trace under the current legal regime'. Melki et al. (2012, pp. 78-80), states that government subsidies and advertising revenues are not the only sources of funding for the media; in a tight media market and a climate of tough competition among the various media companies, 'invisible money' or 'political money' flourishes. This practice also existed before and during the civil war, where money was generated both locally and from foreign sources. Contributors include, but are not limited to, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Libya, Iran, various European countries, and the United States. Dajani (2013) explained that outside powers and interests continue to use Lebanese media to play an active role in the country's and the region's affairs. He wrote:

Because of the sectarian nature of Lebanon and its media, the various media institutions usually focus exclusively on issues relevant to a particular religious sect rather than on those relevant to the larger Lebanese society. Furthermore, the total population of Lebanon is in itself too small to allow for the financial self-sufficiency of the 110 licensed political newspapers and a multitude of radio and television stations. Given the lack of financial self-sufficiency and the low

salaries of the average newspaper journalist, media professionals and institutions are forced to seek outside subsidies.

Both print and audiovisual media outlets are not financially self-sufficient: they accept monetary assistance from outside sources in exchange for editorial support. This phenomenon allows foreign and business interests to use the media as a vehicle through which to present their agenda and exert influence on internal and regional affairs; indeed, handing out bribes to newspapers and journalists is commonly accepted as normal, and even justified by some, on account of the poor salaries and lack of benefits available to journalists (Abu-Laban, 1966, p. 514).

Dajani supported his argument with extracts from the writings of different journalists, including the owner of *Aldiyar* newspaper, Charles Ayoub, and prominent journalist and current managing editor of the newspaper *al-Mustaqbal*, Faysal Salman. According to Dajani (2013), there is no definitive evidence of political funding. The issue remains publicly elusive, yet the practice is common knowledge among media professionals and critics.

5.3.3. Freedom of Speech

Describing the Lebanese media as free, independent, objective, impartial, and competent has been a debatable point among many scholars; according to Nabil Dajani (2013), saying that the ‘Lebanese media are the most free in the Arab region’ is a myth.

freedom of the media in Lebanon is restricted, as it is in other Arab countries, but the difference is that the restrictions have their origins in Lebanon’s sectarian and financial structures rather than in the government. The Lebanese media are relatively free from government interference because Lebanon does not have a ‘real’ government but rather a coalition of tribal-sectarian ‘bosses’ or financiers. The power and influence of these bosses are usually greater than that of government institutions.

The panel of the Media Sustainability Index (MSI) believed that in Lebanon there is ‘free speech in the media, until there isn’t’ (2014, p. 3). Despite a framework of legal protection, the feeling is that the rug can be pulled out from under the exercising of free speech, depending on the circumstances. This does not come in the form of government censorship, but instead, can be the result of sectarian assaults, threats, and political or private economic pressure to silence a media

organisation. At a certain point in their history, *MTV*, *Al-Jadeed*, and *Future TV* channels were forced to close due to their political affiliations⁵⁰.

Political blogger, Ramez Dagher of *Moulahazat.com*, noted that there is no actual ‘constitutional’ guarantee of freedom of speech. Article 75 of the Press Law and Article 13⁵¹ of the constitution forbid publishing news that ‘contradicts with public ethics or is inimical to national or religious feelings or national duty’. Journalists are also prohibited from insulting the Head of State or foreign leaders, and those charged with press offences may be prosecuted in a special publications court⁵² (MSI, 2014, p. 3). The relative freedoms enjoyed by journalists in Lebanon however, are often a result of the lax enforcement of its outdated and vague press laws rather than a desire to uphold its constitutional values. The print media in Lebanon follows the Press Law of 1962 and the audiovisual media is restricted to Broadcast Law of 1994⁵³.

In 2009, a draft law that would allow citizens to access and request information was proposed, but was largely overlooked by lawmakers, and until the date of this research, no progress has been made on this proposal. A Lebanese media watchdog group, *Maharat Foundation*⁵⁴, crafted legal amendments that would abolish prison sentences for crimes related to publishing, loosen restrictions on electronic media, provide for greater transparency of media ownership and

⁵⁰ Pearson, B., 2009, ‘Lebanon’s Murr TV back on air’, available at: <http://variety.com/2009/tv/news/lebanon-s-murr-tv-back-on-air-1118000836/> [retrieved 28 October 2014]

⁵¹ Article 13 of the constitution states that: ... there shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the God Almighty shall respect all religions and creeds and shall guarantee, under its protection, the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It shall also guarantee that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, shall be respected’ (Lebanon’s Constitution of 1962 with Amendments through 2004, available at: https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Lebanon_2004.pdf [retrieved 16 October 2014])

⁵² The penal code, in article 473, can punish blasphemy with one year in prison even though freedom of conscience is under constitutional protection.

⁵³ The 1994 Audio Visual Media law, legislated several years after the end of the 15-year civil war, came in response to the wartime launching of many ideologically-based television and radio broadcasters. Its purpose was to re-establish the central government’s control over licensing of broadcast media (MSI, 2014, p.5)

⁵⁴ http://maharatfoundation.org/?page_id=28 [retrieved 16 October 2014]

financing, and halt requirements for prior licensing of political publications⁵⁵ ; the proposals were still pending at the end of 2012. Earlier in the year, the Ministry of Information (MOI) proposed the Lebanon Internet Regulation Act (LIRA), which would have allowed the government to restrict online expression. The bill suffered defeat after contemptuous criticism from civil society activists and the general public (Freedom House, 2013)⁵⁶.

5.3.4. Censorship

Throughout the history of the Lebanese media, most censorship practices were politically, religiously or morally motivated; according to the annual report on 'Press and Cultural Freedom in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine' (Firas Talhouk, 2013), the year 2013 marked the return of censorship to Lebanon. The report stated that:

local and foreign movies and plays were banned. This renewal poses a threat to cultural growth after a significant decline in censorship in the previous year. Also, the Anti-Cybercrime and Intellectual Property Rights Bureau summoned several journalists and bloggers, compounding a general lack of clarity about the legal powers of this new unit at the Internal Security Forces (ISF) (p. 11).

The Syrian crisis that started in 2011 had an indirect impact on the censorship of media and journalists. Anti-Cybercrime and Intellectual Property Rights Bureau questioned several journalists and bloggers who had published controversial opinion articles on their sites and social network accounts; in addition, movies, plays, and paintings were banned from the Beirut International Film Festival, theatres and exhibitions. All these recent violations of the freedom of expression show that media and cultural freedom in Lebanon continue to face three major obstacles: impunity of those who harm journalists, attacks carried out by security forces as well as non-state groups, and the return of censorship on artistic and cultural works (Talhouk, 2013, p. 11).

⁵⁵ Freedom of the Press, 2012, 'Lebanon', available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/lebanon#.VGMwATSUc2Y> [retrieved 16 October 2014]

⁵⁶ <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4eccefc521.html> [retrieved 28 July 2014]

Investigating and analysing the current media landscape, has provided the relevant foundation on which the Lebanese online newspapers were formed. It shows that despite the unstable political and economic situation in Lebanon, its media landscape is considered to be the regional centre of media production; according to Media Factbook (2013, p. 6), the country has a solid TV and audiovisual industry and hosts the most widely viewed television satellite channels, as well as the most prominent production companies in the region. In 1994, Lebanon legalised private ownership of radio and television stations: the only country in the Middle East to do so, at the time. In 1996, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) became the first Arab satellite station to broadcast from the Arab world (Rinnawi, 2006, p. 38). This shows that the Lebanese mass media were pioneers in adopting and adapting to new technologies, including the adoption of the Internet and the launching of online newspapers, as will be discussed in the following section.

The praise of Lebanese mass media is belied by the problems created by ownership concentration, the influence of political confessionalism, outdated media laws, and the extra-legal and para-legal measures of press censorship and freedom of speech.

The focus of this research is the investigation of two online Lebanese newspapers that have descended from a print version, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, therefore, it is important to discuss the history and development of the print industry in Lebanon. The context of newspapers in Lebanon will be highlighted in this section to illustrate the development and changes that have taken place due to new communication technology.

5.4. The History and Development of Print Newspapers in Lebanon

Printing was introduced into Lebanon by a group of Maronite priests as early as 1610, however, the first popular, non-religious Arabic weekly newspaper in Lebanon, *Hadikat Al-Akhbar* ('The News Garden') was not launched until 1858 (Lunde, 1981). It was soon followed by other weekly papers, most of which were edited by Lebanese intellectuals 'who sought to educate and guide members of their community in times of crisis (Dajani, 1992, pp. 22-23). These early Lebanese

newspapers came under strict Ottoman political control, and over the years, the severe restrictions imposed on the print media served as a unifying factor, bringing together journalists and political activists and creating a nationalist outlook; thus, with the increasing pressure on the press, Lebanese journalists began calling for independence and political freedom of the Arabs from the Ottoman regime.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Lebanon emerged as a culturally liberal model of modernity, and Beirut was the epicentre of publishing in the Arab world. By the end of the 1940s, Lebanon already published some 39 newspapers, as well as 137 periodicals and journals in three languages⁵⁷. Beirut hosted the first book fair in the Middle East in 1956, and by the early sixties, there were close to a hundred publishers, and more than 250 printing presses in Lebanon (Migliorino, 2008, pp. 122-124). Lebanon's daily newspapers can be qualified as non-commercial, with few exceptions; many were not chiefly established to generate profit and their content usually carries clear ideological and political undertones (Dabbous and Hamdan, 2006).

The 2009 national readership survey by Ipsos Stat estimated that the five most popular newspapers in Beirut were *Annahar*, *Al-Balad*, *Al-Mustaqbal*, *Assafir*, and *Al-Akhbar*. Founded in 1933 and 1974, respectively, *Annahar* and *Assafir* have long been considered to be among the country's top newspapers; although their main focus is on political news, they also cover social and cultural issues. Historically, *Annahar* has taken a right wing stance, and today supports the *March 14 Alliance*⁵⁸,

⁵⁷ Migliorino, N., 2008, *(Re)constructing Armenia in Lebanon and Syria: ethno-cultural diversity and the state in the aftermath of a refugee crisis*, New York: Berghahn Book, p. 123

⁵⁸ The March 14 Alliance (تحالف 14 آذار), named after the date of the Cedar Revolution, is a coalition of political parties and independents in Lebanon formed in 2005 that are united by their anti-Syrian regime stance and their opposition to the pro-Syrian regime March 8 Alliance. It is led by MP Saad Hariri, younger son of Rafik Hariri, the assassinated former prime minister of Lebanon, as well as other figures such as Amine Gemayel, president of the Kataeb Party, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_14_Alliance [retrieved 25 August 2014]

while the historically leftist *Assafir*, supports the *March 8 Alliance* ⁵⁹ (Melki et al., 2012, p. 21).

Established by the Hariri family in 1995, *Al-Mustaqbal* is a mouthpiece for the FM and its leader, Saad Hariri, the former prime minister and son of the late Rafik Hariri⁶⁰.

Founded in 2003, *Al-Balad* is a commercial newspaper, printed in tabloid format. Using aggressive and controversial promotional campaigns, it focuses on political, social, and cultural issues, but tends to be more sensational⁶¹.

Relaunched in 2006, *Al-Akhbar* quickly established itself as an audacious liberal newspaper, with investigative reports and a sharp critical tone. Uniquely featuring historically taboo subjects⁶², the newspaper has been widely accused of supporting the *March 8 Alliance* and even of being the mouthpiece of *Hezbollah*, despite numerous reports harshly critiquing this political alliance's leaders, ideologies, and decisions; nevertheless, the newspaper's tone contrasts starkly with the rhetoric and policies of the *March 14 Alliance*. *Al-Joumhouria* and *Al-Binaa* are the latest additions to the Lebanese newspaper scene. While little research about the two papers exists, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party controls the latter, while the former is controlled by former defence minister, Elias Murr, nephew of Gabriel Murr who controls the Murr family's media empire (Melki et al., 2012, p.21).

⁵⁹ The name dates back to 8 March 2005 when different parties called for a mass demonstration in downtown Beirut in response to the Cedar Revolution. The demonstration thanked Syria for helping stop the Lebanese Civil War and the aid in stabilising Lebanon and supporting the Lebanese resistance to the Israeli occupation, available at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_8_Alliance#cite_note-tds10- [retrieved 25 August 2014]

⁶⁰ Future Movement (Arabic: تيار المستقبل, Tayyar Al-Mustaqbal) (FM) is a Lebanese political movement, led by MP Saad Hariri, the younger son of the assassinated former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafik Hariri. The movement is the largest member of the March 14 Alliance, which won a majority of the seats in the 2009 parliamentary elections, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Future_Movement [retrieved 10 October 2014]

⁶¹ <http://www.albaladonline.com/ar/Subpage.aspx?pageid=11827> [retrieved 16 October 2014]

⁶² *Al-Akhbar* uncovered corruption in the justice system against a judge giving reduced sentences to drug dealers in March 2014. While the judge was punished and the evidence provided by *Al-Akhbar* was deemed valid, the journalist and the newspaper were still charged and had to pay a large fine, available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/arab-awakening/bilal-hamade/lebanese-media-retaliates-against-politicians-crackdown> [retrieved 14 October 2014]

The 1962 Press law, which remains in force today, requires that any newspaper or periodical that wishes to publish news on political events, must first obtain a legislative decree granting it a Category 1 licence (Dajani, 2013); this requirement resulted from the considerable number of political publications that had arisen in the 1950s. The government ceased granting new licenses in an attempt to reduce the number of print media with Category 1 licenses, and required any publisher who wished to start a daily newspaper to acquire two existing licenses from publishers who were going out of business, (Dajani, 2013).

The Lebanese newspapers were characterised by a general tendency to oppose the national government, according to Dajani (1992); however, this did not mean that it played the role of ‘watchdog’ in safeguarding public interest. Its opposition to the government, the analysis revealed, was usually a result of its support for, or bondage to, another authority that was ‘politically and (or) militarily active on the Lebanese scene’; furthermore, the fact that a Lebanese media supported a particular authority, did not necessarily mean that it would continue with its support. The country went through a long period of civil war ‘during which new political authorities appeared, and several others changed positions’ (p. 71). The main purpose of the early Lebanese newspapers was to call for the unity of people of the same ethnic or religious group; because each newspaper spoke for a certain group, the news coverage was mainly subjective and their editorials advised the people on the ways that action should be taken.

Political stability was restored in Lebanon (1990-1999) and the Lebanese print media witnessed a healthy growth during this period: the media industry accounted for about 10.5% of the total Arab media market, yet failed to recover its pre-war market share of 24.6% (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 12). This is a direct result of the media companies having already established themselves in other Arab markets reducing Beirut’s chances of becoming a regional media and advertising hub during that period; most importantly, the Lebanese newspapers had started launching their online editions (see section 5.5. below).

The low economic growth rates in 2000-2003 negatively affected media and advertising budgets, which proved highly elastic to the demands of the economic conditions (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 12); although, the year 2004 witnessed an expansion in the media industry, the following two years saw a negative reversal, due to the political developments and the July war; during this stage, Lebanon's print and advertising industry had been thriving in a challenging economic environment (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 12). The development in the media sector was largely attributable to the expansion of digital media, along with the boost in advertising services which started in 2010; another factor which propelled the print industry was the upsurge in the Internet and mobile penetration rates: for example, Lebanon's broadband market had seen a number of changes between 2011 and 2012, in particular, the introduction of wireless broadband which increased from 11% in 2011 to 26% in 2012 (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 19). The proportion of individuals with access to Internet increased to 64%, while those using the Internet reached 61% in 2012 (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 19).

In conclusion, the print media in Lebanon has passed through many important phases. At first, newspapers were mainly used as a medium to call for independence. During the civil war (1975-1990), newspapers were the mouthpiece for certain political militias. However, the post-war period, where Lebanon started recovering economically and politically, is considered as the golden age of the Lebanese mass media. During this phase, mass media witnessed the expansion of the digital sector by adopting new technologies such as the Internet and online newspapers.

5.5. Birth and Stages of Online Newspapers in Lebanon

The Internet paved the way for the traditional Lebanese newspapers to launch their electronic versions; therefore, it is necessary to briefly map the history of the Internet in Lebanon, before investigating the birth of the country's online newspapers.

The Internet connection was introduced in Lebanon by the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1993⁶³. AUB's website was the first Lebanese one under the Lebanese country domain (.LB) and was also published under the US educational top level domain (.edu) (Baydoun, 1999, p. 11). The perplexities and implications of the task of spreading the Internet were way beyond anticipation, however; at that time, the Lebanese infrastructure and telecommunication systems had been devastated by 15 years of civil war; moreover, the Lebanese postal, telegraph and telephone (PTT) facilities (as in the majority of developing countries) were generally owned by the government, which implied a monopoly on telecommunication services, and a reluctance to provide adequate competitive amenities (Bukhalid, 1994). The local expertise was volatile and the supply of telecommunication-related products was mainly based on financial brokers. The government showed a passive interest in the Internet and preferred to focus on addressing more basic or urgent obligations rather than attending to public utilities exposed to vandalism, lack of maintenance, harsh operational environments and technological obsolescence (Bukhalid, 1994).

In 1995, the first Internet Service Provider (ISP) started supplying Internet connections to subscribers and companies. The Internet connection was very slow and expensive at that time (Zohrob, 1997, p. 8): in 1999, there were 40 thousand Internet subscribers in Lebanon and only 17 companies providing the service.

Lebanon was first connected to the Internet through satellites and via two main stations named *Orbaniya* and *Jorit El-Ballout*, (In Arabic: محطة العربية ومحطة جورة (البلوط) according to an article published in *Annahar* (2005); this process was achieved through two marine fibre optic cables (p. 16). Cable companies provided unlimited access to the Internet, linked to either Cyprus or Alexandria (Egypt) until January 2003. These companies signed agreements with international Internet providers from the United States and Europe which made the connections very expensive for both the Lebanese companies and users (*Annahar*, 2005, p. 16).

⁶³ Yamout S. et al., 2005. 'Lebanese National Report for WSIS', available at: http://wsispapers.choike.org/wsis_lebanon_report_on_icts.pdf, p. 4 [retrieved 15 October 20014]

Since the launch of the Internet in Lebanon, the Lebanese Ministry of Telecommunication, together with some private sectors, worked on improving the Internet connection and services. January 2003 saw the new regulations halted on the operation of illegal Internet providers, while introducing the ‘dedicated Internet line’ as an alternative. The Ministry of Telecommunication, together with 'Ogero' (the government’s land-line provider) offered the Broadband Internet over Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) service for the first time in Lebanon: DSL technology is the most popular technology worldwide for obtaining broadband Internet through existing telephone wires; this service provides the option of browsing the Internet and making telephone calls at the same time (www.ogero.gov.lb).

It is noteworthy here to mention that, in Lebanon, the ‘stand-alone Internet content providers’, (those that do not serve as additional outlets for government agencies or broadcasters) do not receive any government financing: stand-alone providers of the Internet content draws on a combination of advertising and user fee financing. The current Internet providers in Lebanon rent out bandwidth from the Ministry of Telecommunications (McKenzie, 2006, p. 134).

Since July 2014, a new pricing plan was introduced by the Minister of Telecommunication, Boutros Harb. The aim was to attract new investments in Lebanon and provide lower prices for consumers. With the new prices, a 2 megabit per second (Mbps), unlimited download plan, for example, would cost \$50 US per month (*The Daily Star*, 2014); until 30 June 2012, it was estimated that there were 2,152,950 Internet users in Lebanon - 52% of the Lebanese population use or have access to the Internet (*Internet World Statistics*, 2012).

Despite being seen as a pioneer of Arab business, Lebanon still has the slowest and most expensive Internet in the Middle East and arguably, in the world. *Ookla*, a company that tests Internet speeds, often ranks Lebanon last on its global net index; it comes after countries like Zimbabwe, Iraq and Uzbekistan (Bassam and Dziadosz, 2014). The Internet service in Lebanon, as in all services operated by the government, is subject to political struggles, administrative corruption and

absence of planning (Bassam and Dziadosz, 2014). Finally, the continuous interruption in service provision is of major concern: every now and then the Internet is ruptured due to different reasons (such as the continuous disconnection of electricity). Analysts say it has inhibited economic growth at a time when Lebanon is suffering from fallout of the war in neighbouring Syria, which effects its tourism and investment (Bassam and Dziadosz, 2014). An improvement in Internet connection in Lebanon would not only develop the Lebanese business and economy, but it would positively affect the online newspaper industry. In general, Lebanese print newspapers began dealing with the technology of online publishing since *Apple* launched its programme in 1985; however, according to Alie Ajko (2006), newspapers in the Middle East passed through three stages of online publishing: the stage of publishing archive CDs, the stage of publishing an online image, and the stage of publishing an online newspaper, which are discussed in the next section.

5.5.1. The Stage of Publishing Archive CDs

Arab newspapers initially published all the content of their newspapers on compact disks (CDs) - the primary attempt towards adopting electronic media (Ajko, 2006, p. 42). The first Arabic newspaper to use this technology was the Lebanese *Al-Hayat* newspaper. 17 October 1995 saw the launching of its first CD - 'The Electronic Archive of Al-Hayat' - which contained six- months' worth of publishing (Ajko, 2006, p. 42). The Kuwaiti newspaper, *Al-Qabas*, produced a CD at the beginning of 1996 which covered the newspaper's issues for the previous year, and in July 1997, the Lebanese newspapers *Annahar* and *Assafir* introduced their Archive CDs. in February 1998, The Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, announced in a written article that 'its archive is now available on CDs' in February 1998. Finally, in May 1998 *Al-Sharqal-Awsat* newspaper followed the same trend by launching its own archive CD (Ajko, 2006, p. 42).

5.5.2. The Stage of Publishing an Online Image

The Arab newspapers were aware of the importance of publishing their content online since the spread of the Internet worldwide in 1990; yet, it was not until 9

September, 1995, that *Al-Sharqal-Awsat* newspaper published its online version in an image format (PDF). Three days before, the newspaper published on its ‘first page’ an article indicating that its online version would be open to the public on 9 September; this trend was followed soon after by other newspapers going online (Ajko, 2006, p. 42). Table 5.1 below presents the birth of online newspapers in the Middle East.

Name of Newspaper	Year of first online issue	Country of Publication
<i>Al-Sharqal-Awsat</i>	1995	London
<i>Annahar</i>	1996	Lebanon
<i>Al-Safir</i>	1996	Lebanon
<i>Al-Ayam</i>	1996	El Bahrain
<i>Al-Raya</i>	1997	Qatar
<i>Al-Joumhouriya</i>	1997	Egypt
<i>Al-Jazeera</i>	1997	Saudi Arabia
<i>Al-Qabas</i>	1997	Kuwait
<i>Al-Sha'b</i>	1997	Egypt
<i>Al-Watan</i>	1997	Oman
<i>Al-Siyasa</i>	1997	Kuwait
<i>Al-Ahram</i>	1998	Egypt

Source: Ajko, A.. 2006. ‘The Arabic Electronic Journalism: Present and Future’, p.51

Table 5.1: Birth of Online Newspapers in the Middle East

The table above shows most Arabic print newspapers launched their online versions in 1997; until 2001, there were around 148 Arabic print newspapers in the Middle East, however, only 76 of these had an online version (Alzabad, 2001). This demonstrates that while only 54% had an online version in 2001, generally, almost all print newspapers in the Middle East, particularly Lebanon, currently exist on the Internet – a demonstration that Arab newspapers were late in adopting and adapting to new media technologies.

5.5.3. The Stage of Publishing an Online Newspaper

The Arab world witnessed the birth of online news websites that lacked a printed version, at this stage. *Al-Jareeda* (<http://www.aljareeda.net>) was the first Arabic born-on-the-web newspaper, launched on 1 January 2000 in Abu Dhabi (Ali, 2006,

p. 43), and after a year and five months, another news website, *Elaph*, (www.elaph.com) was launched online on 21 May 2001 (Ali, 2006, p.43). The number of born-on-the-web newspapers started to increase, at that point. The Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) news website (www.tayyar.org) was the most visited Lebanese news website in 2009, according to Melki et al. (2012, p. 22). This website was established in 2001 to promote the FPM and the agenda of its leader, General Michel Aoun. The website offers breaking news, political local and international news, in addition to cultural and social topics. *Elnashra* (www.Elnashra.com), the focus of one of the online newspapers in this research, occupies the second position (Melki et al., 2012, p. 22). Third in rank, the Lebanese forces website (www.Lebanese-forces.com), the mouthpiece of the Lebanese forces political party, provides the same variety of news others offer with an overt slant in favour of its owner's agenda (Melki et al., 2012, p. 22).

Some studies revealed that online news websites in the Middle East are far behind the international ones, especially when comparing the number of Arab online news websites to the population (Al Hussein, 2006, p. 16; Ajko, 2006, p. 43). The low number of Arabs using the Internet is blamed on weak Internet connections and a host of sociological, cultural, educational and economical obstacles (Al-Husseini, 2006, p. 16). The concept of online news website was not fully integrated in the Arab world for several reasons, mostly illiteracy in both reading and computer skills, according to Ajko (2006, p. 43); on the other hand, the Lebanese newspapers were among the first in the region to make use of the Internet as a technology that had been available since 1994. Competing against European-based rivals equipped with financial support and modern technology, three daily Lebanese newspapers, *Alanwar*, *Annahar* and *Assafir*, placed themselves online by 1996. *Annahar* newspaper, for example, launched the first electronic edition on 1 January, 1996 (Gonzalez-Quijano, 2003, pp. 64-75), at the same time as the *New York Times* launched its web product, followed by the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Associated Press*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and many others (Carlson, 2003, p. 51). In fact, when it comes to the date of the launching of Lebanese online

newspapers, they were not so far behind in adopting and adapting to new technology from those international, well-known newspapers.

Popular national Lebanese newspapers tend to be an immediate source of mainstream news about Lebanon, particularly because they have been able to rapidly post breaking news items, in spite of most of these local news websites being only recently established; like offline news sources, some of them belong outright to political parties, while the rest tend to favour one side or the other (Melki et al., 2012, p. 39).

The Lebanese still preferred to read news, until recently, in a print format rather than an online version. The Arab Media Outlook surveyed 400 Lebanese between 2009 and 2013, and found that 2% of the Lebanese only use the Internet to read the news, and 21% equally read the print and online forms; furthermore, 19% buy print newspapers on a daily basis, while 23% read news online more than 5 times per week (Arab Media Outlook, 2010, pp.94-99). These statistics illustrated that print newspapers remain the dominant form of news consumption, although nearly 35% read news online, 11% prefer the Internet to print (Arab Media Outlook, 2010, pp.94-99). Political topics are the most read in the Lebanese newspapers (72%) followed by current affairs (56%), while 55% of the Lebanese choose their newspapers because the 'coverage of the news is the best' in their opinion. The most read print newspapers are *Al-Balad* (46%) and *Annahar* (42%) and the most surfed online news website is *tayyar.org* (20%) followed by *Annahar* (10%)⁶⁴.

The increasing appetite for online news in Lebanon has resulted in a rising demand for online content, specifically in the fields of social networking and online gaming - Lebanon ranks among the top five countries in Facebook usage, topping the list of Arab countries using English language for social media; the most

⁶⁴ The data and findings on the newspaper market in Lebanon which was collected by the *Arab Media Outlook* (2009-2013) and the *Nielsen Company* are presented in charts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Appendix F)

popular website in Lebanon is Google search engine, followed by Facebook and YouTube (Soueid et al., 2014, p. 20).

To sum it up, a major turning point was reached in the realm of the Lebanese mass media by the end of the 1990s in the advent of the first online edition of a print newspaper. Today, hundreds of Arabic publications are available online to which one should add a large number of Arabic-speaking and/or Arabic-oriented sites that distribute information in one form or another (Gonzalez-Quijano, 2003, p. 64). The high competition among media industries, in addition to many other factors, has urged the Lebanese traditional print newspapers to quickly adopt and adapt an online version, discussed in the following chapter of this thesis.

5.6. Profiles of the Study Samples

It is useful to present brief profiles of the two Lebanese print newspapers, before discussing the rationale and development of online newspapers in Lebanon. This will lead to an understanding of the background of the case study, and the information will be presented *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* print newspapers, respectively. *Elnashra* is excluded from this section since it is a born-on-the-web newspaper that lacks a print version.

5.6.1. Profile of *Annahar*

Gebran Tueni (the grandfather) published a four-page, hand-set paper, with a staff of five people, including himself, on 4 August 1933 (see figure 5.1 below for the first issue of *Annahar*). The newspaper started with a capital of 50 gold pieces collected from friends, and a circulation of just 500 copies. Gebran (the grandfather) was a mere paperboy at the time, selling newspapers on the streets of the capital, Beirut. He gained his experience in journalism while working for another newspaper, and went on to co-found *Al-Ahrar* print newspaper, before he decided to launch his own newspaper, *Annahar* (Annahar Brochure, 1993, p. 2).



Source: <http://www.annahar.com/aboutus.php?type=who&table=who&day=Wed#anchor> [retrieved 10 May 2008]

Figure 5.1: First Issue of *Annahar* published on August 4, 1933

In 1947, Gebran Tueni passed away, leaving the newspaper to his son Ghassan (born in 1926) who had to delay his graduate studies at Harvard University and return to Lebanon to take over the newspaper; committed to the legacy of his father, the new and young editor-publisher gradually developed a new team of journalists, determined to modernise the paper, in terms of both the editorial content and technical production (*Annahar* Brochure, 1993, p.7).

Ghassan Tueni remained the Chairman of the Board of Directors of *Annahar* until the return of his son Gebran, after he was forced into exile for two years. Gebran Tueni became the publisher, chairman of the board, general manager and editor of *Annahar* on 1 January 2000. He came to international prominence in March 2000 when he wrote an editorial calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. Gebran Tueni was assassinated by a car bomb in Mkalles, near Beirut on 12 December, 2005, aged 48. His father, Ghassan, took charge of *Annahar* in 2006 until his death on 8 June 2012. After the assassination of Gebran, his daughter, Nayla, was appointed the Deputy General Manager in 2007. Nayla revived *Nahar*

Al-Chabab (Annahar for youth) which her father launched in 1993, and she was one of the founders of the ‘Lebanese Youth Shadow Government’⁶⁵.

Annahar faced many challenges throughout its history such as military and civil courts cases, suspension, the jailing of Ghassan Tueni, the targeted attacks during the war, the breaking into its offices, the stealing of its archives, the kidnapping of its editors, the attempt to end the life of one of its journalists, Marwan Hamadeh, and finally, the assassination of Samir Kassir and Gebran Tueni⁶⁶.

In conclusion, *Annahar* newspaper has been managed, since its establishment in 1933 until today, by four generations of the Tueni family. The proprietorship of the newspaper has been passed from the founder Gebran (1933 -1947), to his son Ghassan (1948-1999 and 2006), to his grandson Gebran (2000-2005), to his great-grand-daughter, Nayla – (from 2007 until the present). In total, the Tueni family have owned and managed *Annahar* for 81 years. Ghassan Tueni gave the duty to launch an electronic version of *Annahar* in 1996 to his nephew, Wadih Tueni, who, although he has no journalistic background, is the present IT manager of *Annaharonline*.

It is important to clarify here that the Tueni is a distinguished Lebanese family that left its marks in politics, journalism, writing, poetry and education⁶⁷. The family

⁶⁵ The Youth Shadow Government is a youth organisation that mimics the Government of Lebanon. It is made up of approximately 30 students, each of whom serves as the shadow minister for the corresponding ministry in the actual government. The Shadow government conducts studies, makes policy recommendations and meets with the adult ministers. The Government of Lebanon recognised the institution in place of a Higher Council of Youth, and implemented a lower voting age (18 years old) at the recommendation of the shadow government, available at: <http://www.icicp.org/resource-library/icp-publications/global-youth-service-database/asia-and-the-pacific/west-asia-middle-east/lebanon/> [retrieved 14 October 2014]

⁶⁶ See Appendix G: ‘Significant Dates and Events that Formed Annahar’s History’, available at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An-Nahar> [retrieved 15 October 2014]

⁶⁷ Ghassan Tueni was a member of the Lebanese parliament (1951-1977) and, at various times, the minister of information, national education, labour and social affairs, industry and petroleum, and tourism. He was also an ambassador and permanent representative of Lebanon to the United Nations (UN) (1977-1982); president of Balamand University (1990-1993); and finally member of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut (AUB) (1998-2002) (AUB Bulletin Today, June 2003). Gebran Tueni was elected as a Member of Parliament, Lebanon, for the Greek Orthodox seat in Beirut's first district, in May 2005. He also became an active member of the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) and advisor on Middle-East affairs to WAN’s president in 1990. He was also a member of WAN’s Fund for Press Freedom Development, created in 1994.

owns the majority of the newspaper's shares in addition to the Hariri family, Prince Waleed Bin Talal, the Greek Orthodox Diocese, the businessman, Issam Fares and Press Media (Cochrane Paul, 2007).

The ownership of *Annahar* has had an indirect impact on its policy. Ghassan Tueni once claimed that his newspaper *Annahar* is 'against anybody in the government and with anybody against the government' (Dajani, 1971, p. 165). *Annahar* has been characterised by a liberal orientation since 2004, which, without denying its roots and Arab affiliations, looks to Europe and the West in general as a political and cultural reference point; with the deteriorating domestic institutional crisis, exacerbated by regional opposition between a pro-US bloc and the Iranian–Syrian axis, *Annahar* became the voice of the popular campaign against Syrian interference in Lebanon, and started to express criticism towards *Hezbollah* and its main regional supporter, Iran; however, after the formal end of the crisis in May 2008, *Annahar* apparently abandoned its political commitment and has since been gradually reshaped as a 'newspaper for every Lebanese' (*European Journalism Center*, 2010).

5.6.2. Profile of *Aldiyar*

Charles Ayoub established *Aldiyar* newspaper on 27 March 1988, as soon as he resigned from the Lebanese army. As discussed previously in this chapter, during that period, Lebanon was passing through a delicate political and security situation. William Harris (2006, p. 224) wrote in his book entitled *The New Face of Lebanon: History's Revenge* that 'the most powerful military element, the Lebanese army, was the least visible political factor until 1988'; consequently, Ayoub used *Aldiyar* newspaper as a 'personal' platform to express his opinion, hatred, support and feelings which he could not reveal during his service in the Lebanese army.

Gebran's mother was the famous poet and writer Nadia Hamadeh. Nayla Tueni was elected in 2009 Parliamentary elections thus taking the seat of her father Gebran after his assassination available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghassan_Tueni [retrieved on 12 May 2009].

Ayoub comes from a military background that lacks any journalistic skills; this was clearly reflected in the harsh, impolite and slang-language used in his writings and throughout his newspaper. The style used in his articles and interviews created a phenomenon in the history of the Lebanese media: on 15 May 2009, Ayoub wrote an article in his newspaper, *Aldiyar*, entitled ‘Charbel Khalil, the piece of shit’ (full article Appendix I); in a 294-word article, Ayoub mentioned the word ‘shit’ ten times, before and after Khalil’s name. This article was condemned by many journalists, media critics, professors and NGOs⁶⁸.

One of *Aldiyar*’s main goals when it was launched in 1988, was to provide a ‘truthful picture and objective news’ of the Lebanese war and political situation: it aimed at encouraging the Lebanese to stay in their country. *Aldiyar*’s policy was to support: the freedom and democracy of Lebanon, the abolition of sectarianism, the access to the civil society, and the Lebanese resistance in the face of the Israeli enemy, according to Charles Ayoub (Ayoub, 2007). It also stated that *Aldiyar* itself would be a unique example of democracy and freedom of opinion in journalism; however, the *Aldiyar* newspaper is known for its support of Syria. This was clear in all of Charles Ayoub’s articles and interviews, for example, in an article entitled *The wickedness of those who are attacking Syria* published in - *Aldiyar* on 16 May 2005, Charles Ayoub bravely stated:

We, in Al-Diyar, have criticized the errors committed by Syrians in Lebanon and have paid the price by being deprived from winning a deputy or ministry position. But this is not so important for us. We, in Al-Diyar, will remain allies to Syria, Al-Assad (The family name of the Syrian President) [...]. We are in the same national ditch with Syria against “Israel “ [...]. We are with Syria, Al-Assad, which prevented the division in Lebanon. We won’t forget how Syria prevented partition in Lebanon [...]. We are with Syria, Al-Assad, which has supported the Lebanese army in disbanding militias and forced them to hand over their weapons to the Lebanese Army. Lebanon and Syria are a historical and geographical fact [...] and this will remain to eternity [...]. We are with Syria, Al-

⁶⁸ **UCIPLiban** (Catholic International Union for Press), May 15, 2009, ‘*Al-Diyar’s Article on Charbel Khalil harms the press and distorts the Lebanese media*’, مقال "الديار" عن شربل خليل يسيء إلى الصحافة وحافة ويشوه وجهه الإعرلام اللبناني، available at: http://ucipliban.org/arabic/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11584&Itemid=228 [retrieved 19 March 2011]

Assad, whether we stay alone in the arena or with some other groups [...] we will remain with Syria and we do not regret this..

Ayoub is well-known as the ‘journalist’ who allegedly received bribes to use his newspaper to humiliate or praise certain political parties or politicians in Lebanon. One of the recent examples is an article published in *Aldiyar* on 3 November 2012 under the title, ‘Who Governs Lebanon? Security officials or State or justice officials?’. In his front-page account, Ayoub clearly described accepting financial assistance (\$150,000 per month from Al-Hariri family) in return for taking a middle line in his newspaper’s coverage of two political alliances, the *March 14th* movement (Western-backed, anti-Syria) and the *March 8th* movement (pro-Syria)⁶⁹.

Aldiyar generally paid the price for its subjective policy and unprofessional writings, particularly by Charles Ayoub:

During 1996, *Aldiyar* was indicted five times. and both owner and chief editor faced sentences of two years in jail and large fines. In February 1998, the Lebanese government charged *Aldiyar* three times for defaming President Emile Lahoud, the Prime Minister, and the judiciary’ (Rugh, 2004, pp. 97-98).

On 26 April 2009, Elaph.com reported that the Syrian authorities had permanently banned the Lebanese daily, *Aldiyar*, from being distributed in Syria⁷⁰. Unofficial Syrian sources estimated that the ban was motivated by owner Charles Ayoub's decision to run in the Lebanese parliamentary elections in 2009 against senior Lebanese pro-Syrian oppositionist, Michel Aoun. Other sources accused Ayoub of changing his positions, and of joining the Lebanese ‘14 March’ Forces camp. It was also reported that Ayoub had stopped printing the newspaper at the *Al-Wahda* Syrian Government Institution for Printing and Publications, which publishes some of the Syrian government daily papers, including *Al-Thawra* (MEMRI, 2009).

Despite all the suspensions, *Aldiyar* continued with the same style and policy in attacking people, countries, regimes and policies. For example, on April 23, 2009

⁶⁹ See Appendix H for extracts of the article translated from Arabic

⁷⁰ <http://www.elaph.com/Web1/Webform/SearchArticle.aspx?ArticleId=432330§ionarchive=Politics> [retrieved 30 October 2014]

and May 12, 2009, Charles Ayoub vigorously attacked the Syrian website Champress.net, and accused General Michel Aoun of being a ‘real thief’⁷¹. It is worth mentioning here that, after ‘July War 2006’, *Aldiyar* became the voice of *Hezbollah* (a political party that is supported by Syria and Iran) and its mass media (Dajani, 2013).

In conclusion, amidst the political turmoil and general insecurity that Lebanon was facing in 1988, *Aldiyar* was launched not as an ‘objective, truthful’ newspaper as it claimed, but rather as a partisan one; although its slogans were ‘Lebanese, Political, Independent newspaper’, ‘No one is like it’, and ‘Truth in every house’, its policy had always supported the Syrian regime in Lebanon and those who backed it, such as the *Hezbollah* party; consequently, the ‘news-paper’ had become Charles Ayoub’s ‘view-paper’ which lacked objectivity and professionalism.

5.7. Chapter Summary

This thesis is an attempt to explore online newspapers in Lebanon in terms of their adoption and adaptation to new technology; therefore, it has been important to reveal the context of Lebanese mass media, along with the introduction of the Internet and electronic newspapers in Lebanon, in order to gain an understanding of the background to this case study.

This chapter addressed the historical context and development of the Lebanese mass media, particularly print and online newspapers; moreover, the introduction of Lebanon as a unique yet precarious country, showed that the current Lebanese media landscape is a reflection of Lebanon’s political and economic situation. A brief profile of the two print newspapers set the background for the discussion of the rationale and development of Lebanese online newspapers.

In spite of the numerous challenges that Lebanon faced, and is still facing, because of its location and political struggles, the Lebanese mass media was not entirely

⁷¹ See Appendices J and K for extracts of the two articles translated from Arabic.

weakened: the political turmoil, especially during the 15 years of civil war, has permitted the implementation of certain legal measures vital to Lebanon's future, including the fields of information and media technology. Regardless of the damages incurred during the civil war, and the inherent difficulties of rebuilding a technical infrastructure, it is remarkable that Lebanon became one of the first Arab countries to embrace the Internet: the Lebanese newspapers were among the first in the region to make use of a technology that had been available since 1994. Competing against European-based newspapers, which received more financial support and were equipped with better technology, the Lebanese newspapers placed themselves online by 1996. It took a few years for the Internet to spread widely in Lebanon and longer for the public to access it, the Lebanese were rapidly able to seize the opportunities offered by the new technologies and interact with digital communication media such as online newspapers. The Lebanese mass media has played a major role in what can be called the 'incubation period' of information technologies in the Arab world (between the years 1995-2000).

The Internet dramatically empowers persons in the exercise of their right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers, but in a region where nearly all governments abridge the right to freedom of expression in significant ways, 'many have taken a cautious approach toward a medium that permits persons easily, inexpensively, and rapidly to exchange information in ways that elude state control' (Goldstein et al., 1999). The Internet has contributed to new media technology and understanding of communication in a landscape where most media are owned by political parties. The birth of Lebanese online newspapers expanded the limits of traditional media, and since the 'freedom of speech' is considered a myth in Lebanese media, the online newspapers benefited from the greater degree of freedom that the Internet provided to a large sector of international readers. In a country like Lebanon, where political and even moral censorship still exist, 'the Internet contributes significantly to the trend underway since the introduction of new media technologies helps in the diminishing of the control that state authorities can exercise over the circulation of information' (Gonzalez-Quijano, 2003, pp. 64-75) .

Finally, the profile of the two print newspapers showed that *Annahar*, the family-owned newspaper, had played a major role in shaping the social and political aspect of Lebanon. Determined to defend Lebanon from foreign colonial interference, *Annahar* became the bearer of the fight against social and national injustice. It also launched many campaigns against corrupt and authoritarian governments. Due to its political and social positions, the print newspaper was suspended from publication many times and its journalists and editor-in-chief were imprisoned and assassinated; on the other hand, *Aldiyar* Lebanese print newspaper reflected its owner's political views. Charles Ayoub's articles which supported the Syrian regime, together with his personal, subjective style, had changed *Aldiyar* from a 'newspaper' to a 'viewpaper'.

This study conducted three research approaches, at this point, in order to examine how the Lebanese newspapers adapted to, and adopted new technology. Ethnographic observation, ethnographic interviews and content analysis were carried out in Lebanon between 2008 and 2014. The findings of the researcher's ethnographic interviews and observations will be presented and analysed in chapters Six and Seven, and the data of the content analysis of the use of interactive features in the Lebanese online newspapers will be discussed in chapter Eight.

Chapter Six: The Rationale and Development of the Studied Newspapers

6.1. Introduction

The data and findings of this chapter are based on ethnographic interviews with one Chief Executive Officer (CEO), four editors-in-chief, one IT manager, and six online journalists (two from each online newspaper) from two Lebanese online newspapers (*Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*) and a born-on-the-web newspaper, (*Elnashra*). The intention was to explore the rationale and development of the studied newspapers; however, during this process, significant data, in terms of the adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies on work routine, production schedule and employment criteria also emerged; these findings will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

The scrutiny of documents aims at giving an insight into media background and the general development of print and online newspapers in Lebanon, particularly the newspaper entities selected for this research: *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*. It is hoped that this analysis will provide reliable answers to the following research questions: why have newspaper publishers in Lebanon launched online versions of their newspapers? How are these three online newspapers adapting to new media technologies?

It is important to mention that the findings in this thesis do not generally intend to explore any differences between the three online newspaper samples; however, the comparison of the results of ethnographic observations, interviews and content analysis may occasionally yield useful information, which could eventually represent the relationship between print and online versions, even though that is not the main focus of the study.

6.2. The Rationale for Launching an Online version

This study finds a number of differences in the purposes behind the rationale of *Annahar*, *Aldiyar* and *Elnashra* Lebanese online newspapers.

Annahar's website (www.annahar.com) was first launched in August 1995⁷²; many Lebanese had left Lebanon by that time, due to the civil war that had broken out (1975 – 1990). Wadih Tueni, the IT manager of *Annahar*, recalled how his uncle, Ghassan Tueni, had presented his vision of starting an online version of *Annahar*, in 1995: the young Tueni had recently graduated with a Computer Science degree from the American University of Beirut (AUB). He said:

In the beginning, I had no idea how a newspaper works... since I do not have a media background...but I took the challenge, bearing in mind that my role is technical rather than journalistic... (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October, 2008).

According to Tueni, the aim behind launching an electronic version of *Annahar* was to reach the 'Lebanese Diaspora' which was not able to read the print version, either because it was not available in the host country or the distribution occurred too late - the news would be old. Tueni added: 'having an online version for *Annahar* newspaper was a must in order to reach immigrants living abroad' (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October, 2008).

Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, said that *Aldiyar* launched its online version in 2004⁷³: it was one of the last newspapers in Lebanon to establish an electronic copy. Chami stated that: 'we started publishing our news on the Internet out of fear of being left behind technologically, in a very competitive industry' (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March, 2014).

The pilot version of *Elnashra*, a born-on-the-web newspaper, was launched at the end of 2006⁷⁴, a few months after the July War⁷⁵. In May 2007, the Arabic version was officially opened to the public, and, according to its editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, *Elnashra* was launched as an electronic newspaper in order 'to keep its audience updated with all the news and events taking place in Lebanon, the Middle

⁷² Interview with Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October, 2008

⁷³ Skype interview with Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March, 2014

⁷⁴ Interview with Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September, 2008

⁷⁵ Second Lebanon War: Background and Overview, July 12- August 14, 2006, , available at: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/lebanon2.html> [retrieved 10 November 2014].

East and the world'. He added: 'while the print newspaper is unable to provide its readers with the latest news, an online newspaper has the capability of issuing news every second; for this reason, we chose "Race with the News" (in Arabic: سباق مع الخبر) as our slogan' (interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September, 2008).

Another advantage of launching an online publication is that it presents the news in a simple, short and direct way. Semaan explained:

People nowadays are busier than ever and have become expert multi-taskers. Many no longer have the time to sit down to read their daily newspaper or watch television to absorb all the information they need. To meet the demands of this changing environment, *Elnashra* monitors the news on behalf of the reader, and hence it offers the latest news in a summarized, simplified, and direct way. Finally, *Elnashra* is accessed and read free of charge whereas the newspaper is costly and requires more time to be read. (interview: Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008)

Elnashra's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Arz El-Murr, described '*Elnashra* as the first Lebanese newspaper which is updated frequently, and not just once a day, as most Lebanese online newspapers are'. He added: 'this has been proven by the fact that during a short period of time, the traffic on the site skyrocketed... [making]... it the first most visited Lebanese website, and the first news source for Lebanese residents and immigrants'. According to El-Murr, *Elnashra* was:

the website where Lebanese and World news are updated by the minute [...], an independent, uncensored and reliable news [source] on the most technologically advanced Lebanese website. For this reason, *Elnashra* has been [...] a source of reference for... many newspapers and news bulletins broadcast on Lebanese television and radio (interview: Arz El Mur, Beirut, 2008).

Based on the ethnographic interviews, many participants indirectly stated other important factors that helped in the rationale of launching online versions of newspapers; these included the technological flow, competition in media business, reaching the Lebanese Diaspora, the Arab Revolt, the use of social media, and various economic issues, discussed below.

6.2.1. Technological Flow

The global technological flow has the largest and most significant influence on the rationale and development of online newspapers (Holloway, 2010). Ziad Saadeh, a journalist in the editorial team of *Elnashra*, argued:

The introduction of electronic newspapers in Lebanon has been impacted by the technological flow from Western countries. The Lebanese society is a social community where people love to go out, meet with friends and discuss political issues taking place in Lebanon, the Middle East and the World. In contrast, Western people love privacy and prefer to stay at home; for this reason, communication technologies in Western countries have occurred in order to link the society with the outside World; however, Lebanese society in general, and particularly the Lebanese mass media, consumes technologies from Western countries without adapting them to suit their own needs (interview: Ziad Saadeh, Beirut, 9 September 2008)

Reine Abou Moussa, a journalist in *Annaharonline*, believes that the birth of online newspapers in Lebanon provided instantaneous access to an unlimited number of information sources for individual citizens. She said:

Lebanese see in the new interactive multimedia that the online newspapers created, a promise of a “boundary-less” world. This new world is without doubt the result of the technological flow (Skype: Reine Abou Moussa, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014)

Wadih Tueni of *Annaharonline*, stressed that the technological flow refined newspapers. He said:

in an online newspaper, the video and audio news are replacing text-based news. They are becoming the main source of information for many people. Print newspapers which were willing to integrate this new multimedia features found themselves attracted to launching an online version of their newspaper (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008).

This was also confirmed by Najwa Maroun, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyar*, who believed that the Lebanese print newspapers in general, and *Aldiyar* in particular, launched their online versions in order to bring themselves up-to-date in the new information society. Maroun explained that the reason behind launching an online version of *Aldiyar* was to follow the new media trend. She stated:

We want to keep up with the technology and follow what other newspapers are doing, because it is a shame to stay where we are and not progress with the revolution of computers and Internet used nowadays in media and journalism (interview: Najwa Maroun, Beirut, 4 November 2008).

Aldiyaronline desired the image of being an organisation that embraced high technology, after lagging behind as one of the last Lebanese newspapers to adopt an electronic copy. The first Arabic newspaper to launch an online version was in 1995 (see Chapter Five), yet *Aldiyaronline* launched its online edition only in 2004 – nine years later – as a replica copy of its print form. *Annahar* and *Assafir*, in the

meantime, were adding new, interactive features to their design and content, leaving *Aldiyaronline* outside media competition (discussed below).

6.2.2. Competition in Media Industries

The media industries have been characterised by rapid innovation which resulted from the advent of new technologies. Adaptation to these new technologies can arguably leapfrog the positions of existing market players, and quickly attract new readers and advertisers; as a result, the media industry in general and online newspapers in particular, is under constant pressure to adopt new technologies to their industry, in order to maintain effective competition. Online newspapers compete for news and style presentation to attract their readers; according to Zaller:

news competition may be defined as the extent to which two or more news providers offer the same kind of news product to the same audience in the same format at the same time (1999, p. 3)

Diana Skaini, a journalist in *Annaharonline*, believes that the print newspaper industry not only competes with other media such as radio and television, but also with print media and electronic news websites: competition becomes more intense as two or more news providers focus on the same general type of news (local news), compete in the same medium (print or television), and offer their product in the same time slot. Competition becomes less intense, on the other hand, when one or more news programmes receives any sort of subsidy whose effect is to free it from the need to win audience share through market competition (Zaller, 1999, p. 3). It is evident that competition in the media industry encourages it to add new technologies, improve its news content, and find ways to better serve and communicate with its readers; however, the spur of competition is particularly sharp in industries experiencing technological change, where innovation and fresh ideas become essential to survival in the marketplace; according to Al Shehri (2000, p. 232), almost every newspaper in the Middle East in general, and specifically in Lebanon, ‘has to’ be online – without change, they will be changed.

Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, explained that ‘all Lebanese and Arab newspapers such as *Annahar* and *Aljazeera*, were launching a website, so we

felt we [... would] be left behind if we [... didn't] create an electronic version'. The launching of an online edition that had descended from a print parent was neither derived from an organised plan, based on a field study of the market, nor did it express the wishes of the newspaper's owners in many cases; the Lebanese print newspapers therefore felt 'obliged' to launch online versions and to follow the path of other newspapers in a very competitive industry.

6.2.3. Reaching the Lebanese Diaspora

Throughout modern history, Lebanon has experienced 'waves of emigration' for various reasons. Lebanese citizens have travelled abroad to seek better fortunes, for more than a century and a half (Tabar, 2010, p. 2). This has been largely the result of a combination of irregular economic development and undemocratic communal politics; moreover, Lebanon's geographic location, in a region ridden with national and international conflicts, has contributed to emigration throughout this period (Tabar, 2010, p. 2).

The political events which were ignited by the civil war in 1975 (see Chapter Five), the Arab-Israeli conflicts, the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, the war against Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon, the Israeli-*Hezbollah* July war in 2006, the recent conflicts in the Middle East, mainly the war in Syria and the large number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, the inter-communal and extra-communal wars, dangerous security situation, political instability, corruption in economic activities and so on, resulted in the emigration of a large number of people from all Lebanese communities and various economic backgrounds; this is reflected in the composition of immigrants who arrived in many countries including Australia, Canada, USA, United Kingdom⁷⁶, Brazil, France, and Germany. Many Lebanese fled to the Arab world, most notably to the Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE and Kuwait, seeking better work opportunities (Tabar, 2010).

⁷⁶ See Khoury, Kiray (2006), 'The Lebanese in London', A documentary film in fulfilment of a Master's degree in Film, Video and New Screen Media, London: University of East London

There are no reliable figures, but the Lebanese Diaspora is estimated to be around 14 million people, far more than the 4.3 million people living inside Lebanon (The National Archive⁷⁷); according to other statistics, the number of Lebanese living outside the country is thought to be at least double the number of citizens living inside, which means around 8.6 million people (*The Daily Star*, May 2014); for example, in 2009⁷⁸, there were almost 144,000 people of Lebanese origin living in Canada alone (see Appendix L for a detailed geographical distribution of the Lebanese Diaspora). Tueni stated that the policy of launching an online version was to reach the Lebanese Diaspora, which cannot receive the print edition on the day it is distributed in Lebanon. He added: ‘as an Arabic-language newspaper, *Annahar* not only serves Lebanese people living overseas, but also attracts all nations around the world that read, speak and write the Arabic language’ (Interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2014). Ghassan Hajjar, the editor-in-chief of *Annahar*, agreed with Tueni: the main purpose of launching *Annaharonline* was to expand its distribution channel to global readers. He stated:

Our policy is to serve the Arabic audience with priority to Lebanese living abroad who receive the print version of *Annahar* late, by one or two days. Moreover, since millions of Lebanese immigrants stay in touch with their roots via dedicated newspapers, television, radio and online media platforms on a daily basis, there was the need to launch *Annaharonline* as an online source of information (interview: Ghassan Hajjar, Beirut, 9 October 2008).

6.2.4. The Arab Revolt and the Use of Social Media

Annaharonline, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* were all launched before the uprising of the Arab revolt in December 2010 and the advent of social media in 1997 (Hendricks, 2013). The ethnographic interviews revealed a debate between the editors-in-chief and journalists on whether the frequent use of social media, as a news source by many young people who were following the Arab revolts, have had an impact on the launching of the new design and content of the Lebanese online newspapers in 2011.

⁷⁷ <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> [retrieved 10 July 2014]

⁷⁸ In 2009, the researcher and family emigrated to Canada, looking for better opportunities.

Diana Skaini, an online journalist in *Annaharonline*, believed that ‘the rise of new media, and especially social media, was actually one of the reasons behind the launch of the new design and content of *Annaharonline* on 12 December 2012’. Joseph Semaan, however, insisted that *Elnashra*’s new design in 2011 did not have any relationship with the Arab uprisings and the dawning of social networks. He added:

A team of specialised staff and web designers have been working on this new design for eight months, even before the turmoil in the Middle East started. After four years of continuous success, it was time for *Elnashra* to launch its new look that matches the international standards of online newspapers (interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008).

Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, explained that social media networks did not create any threat to *Aldiyaronline*, since people were still going directly to news sites and searching for topics in which they were interested; on the contrary, social media news consumption was supplemental. He stated that:

Facebook users, for example, get their news from feeds written on friends’ and family’s ‘walls’. The stories and videos that are most likely to be shared, emailed, and posted on Facebook aren’t necessarily the newest stories, but they are the most evocative; in other words, the news feed are perhaps the world’s most sophisticated mirror of their readers’ preferences and it is fairly clear that news are [*sic*] not one of them, [... he added] ‘for this reason, in *Aldiyaronline* we do not force our journalists to use these tools’ (Skype: Fadi Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014).

Surprised by the researcher’s question, Mohammad Al-Hani, a journalist in *Aldiyaronline*, believed that there was no link between social media, the Arab Spring and the launching of online newspapers. He confirmed that history had witnessed thousands of uprisings without social media⁷⁹ (Skype: Mohammad Al-Hani and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014)

Reine Abu Moussa, an *Annaharonline* journalist, contradicted Al-Hani’s opinion. She states:

⁷⁹ For example, the Iranian or Islamic Revolution which started in 1978 refers to events involving the overthrow of Iran’s monarchy (Pahlavi dynasty) under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and its replacement with an Islamic republic under Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the revolution. The revolution took place with the help of social media, available at: <http://listverse.com/2010/10/04/top-10-revolutions-felt-around-the-world/> [retrieved 12 November 2014].

During the uprising of the Arab spring, social media was used as a creative way to spur people to be more active and decisive, and to find ways to communicate and organise demonstrations, away from the censorship of the government. There is no doubt that *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Youtube* have played a critical role in mobilisation, empowerment, shaping opinions and influencing change (Skype: Reine Abu Moussa and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

According to Diana Skaini, another *Annaharonline* journalist:

Annaharonline is present on social media in order to keep its audience. If we do not satisfy the needs of our readers, by adding a Facebook page for example, we can barely keep up. On the other hand, the volume of information offered by citizen journalists on social media about political events taking place in their area can seem overwhelming [... she adds], social media is not only the means to reach a larger youth audience, but also helps journalists do their jobs more effectively (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014).

The relationship between the Arab revolt and social media has been lately a disputable issue. Although some journalists tried to disregard its role in the launch of online newspapers, social media remains an active tool of communication between the Arab youths; thus effecting media in general and electronic newspapers in particular.

6.2.5. Economics Issue

The global and local economic situation is an important factor in newspaper businesses choosing to go online; however, in 1995, the year which the Lebanese newspapers started launching their online versions (see Chapter Five), Lebanon was just emerging from 15 years of civil war; by then, the Lebanese economy had radically changed due to its large manpower and economic losses, destruction of property, and so on; for example, in 1990, half of the telephone network was not working and the infrastructure was almost totally damaged (Samii, 2012).

The 1990s continued to be a turbulent decade, despite the prospect of an economic recovery as Lebanon settled into peacetime; in reality, there were unwise spending and monetary policies that increased the debt; many of the markets in the region became less accessible to Lebanese goods, and many political events contributed to the country's continued instability. The first half of the 1990s showed rapid growth, followed by economic decline and a recession after 1995 (Labaki, 1993, p. 196). This downturn can be attributed to

...the Lebanese government's monetary, financial and economic policies. Other influences included one-sided regionalization and globalization, the change in regional political environment, Lebanon's loss of competitiveness, the inconsistent economic policies of successive governments, and the fall in oil prices (Labaki, 1993, p. 196).

The Lebanese economy relies heavily on the service sectors such as tourism, banking, real estate, health care, and education, to fuel growth; however, since 2005, Lebanon witnessed several assassinations (for example the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 and the assassination of Samir Kassir, a journalist in *Annahar*, in June 2005⁸⁰), political and security instability, a war with Israel, and so on, all of which had damaged the country's revenue and affected many of the Lebanese business sectors, including the newspaper industry.

Aldiyar decided to introduce its online edition, *Aldiyaronline* in 2004, amidst the instability and economic losses of the decade; in 2005 Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, was assassinated, causing a change of government, and in 2006, *Elnashra* was established after the July War that was ignited between *Hezbollah* and Israel; consequently, the two electronic newspapers were born in a very difficult political and economic period. This situation generally had a negative effect on the progress and technological development of Lebanese newspapers, particularly the electronic versions; in order to survive, most news publications were supported by generous contributions from wealthy political figures and parties, rather than solely on advertising revenue.

Wadih Tueni, *Annahar*'s IT manager, said:

since its establishment, *Annahar* was aware of the importance of improving its website to compete with other international and Arab news websites, but the financial problems that the newspaper was, and is, still facing, have hindered its advancement (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008).

The *Annahar* newspaper enterprise laid off 50 journalists, staff writers and administrative employees in 2009⁸¹. Some media experts believed that the

⁸⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lebanon_bombings_and_assassinations [retrieved on 14 November 2014]

⁸¹ Financial Crisis Shaking *Annahar* Editorial Team, Beirut, 2009', available at: <http://www.menassat.com/?q=ar/news-articles/7219-financial-crisis-shaking-nahar-editorial-team> [retrieved 10 November 2014]

Lebanese newspaper industry had continually suffered from ‘periodical bankruptcy’ whenever the chaos of random employment deepened; according to Ghassan Hajjar, the editor-in-chief of *Annahar*, ‘the paper is redressing its financial situation to avoid future problems’ (interview, Ghassan Hajjar, Beirut, 9 October, 2008); another setback was that *Annahar*’s shareholders such as Prince Waleed bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz, MP Saad al-Hariri, and former MP, Issam Fares, did not wish to increase their ownership percentages in the newspaper⁸² which affected negatively the newspaper’s budget.

Fady Chami, editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, stated that ‘in 2009-2010, the *Aldiyaronline* department had 77 employees, but due to the bad economic situation in Lebanon in general, and the newspaper in particular, it decided to minimise the number to only 15 employees’; in addition to dismissing many journalists from its online department, *Aldiyaronline* imposed a subscription fee in another attempt to increase its finances; during the researcher’s ethnographic observations and interviews in 2008, *Aldiyaronline* could only be accessed by subscribers who paid a yearly fee; twelve months later, the newspaper was offered to the public, free of charge; on 1 December 2010, the *Aldiyaronline* reintroduced a fee⁸³ which lasted for about three months: in April 2011, *Aldiyaronline* reverted to a free online newspaper. Najwa Maroun, *Aldiyar*’s editor-in-chief, explained that

...having to pay for news that was offered free of charge by other online newspapers resulted in a plummet in the traffic of our website; however, when we stopped the subscription fee, the number of readers doubled or even tripled (interview: Najwa Maroun, Beirut, 4 November 2008)

Elnashra’s editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, also confirmed that they were late in adapting to new technology because of financial constraints (interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2014).

⁸² Financial Crisis Shaking Annahar Editorial Team, Beirut, 2009, available at: <http://www.menassat.com/?q=ar/news-articles/7219-financial-crisis-shaking-nahar-editorial-team> [retrieved 10 November 2014]

⁸³ US \$10/ month; US \$55/six months; and US \$100/annum [Interview with Najwa Maroun, Beirut, 4 November 2008]

2011 witnessed prolonged delays in forming a Lebanese government⁸⁴ which aggravated the region's continued unstable political situation; nonetheless, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* newspapers experienced major changes in their design and content by adapting to new technologies, as shall be discussed in the next section.

6.3. The Development of the Studied Online Newspapers

Technology has played an important role in the development of print newspapers. Day and Schoemaker (2000) identified the media industry as one of those that was most affected by technological innovations in the 1990s. The expansion of print newspapers was linked to the advancement in communication technologies, particularly in their production processes: from writing on paper and the invention of letterpress printing technology, to the new print technologies via computer systems. The late 20th century saw Internet technology open up new possibilities for news delivery (Gunter, 2003, p. 1): never before had so much information been readily accessible to a large number of people, worldwide. The technological revolution of today is creating new challenges and opportunities for the traditional media - the development of newspapers is a good indicator of the changes in media technology (Gunter, 2003, p. 1).

It is worth mentioning that, despite the rapid changes that have overtaken media production and distribution technologies in recent years, there has been less focus on innovation management as an area of study within media management and mass communication literature (Saksena and Hollifield, 2002, p. 76); most studies on media organisations' responses to emerging technologies have focused on their effect on employee job dissatisfaction (Russial, 1994; Stamm, Underwood and Giffard, 1995). This innovation management gap exists in the relevant literature, despite the industry's negative experience with Videotex and Teletext in the 1980s (Day and Schoemaker, 2000). One of the factors driving current interest in

⁸⁴ Khaddaj, A., 2011. 'Lebanese economy struggles as political instability continues', available at: http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/features/business/2011/04/21/feature-01 [retrieved 13 November 2014]

innovation management research is the recognition that many emerging technologies are, in fact, potentially ‘disruptive’ to media industries; in their research on *U.S. Newspapers and the Development of Online Editions*, Saksena and Hollifield believed that ‘disruptive technologies’ force industries and organisations to continuously adjust to a changing environment and threaten their very existence (2002, p. 76).

It can be argued that technological advances have allowed great progress to be made in the processes of printing and newspaper production, with major improvements in photography, methods of communication and speed of news reporting; some of the biggest changes in the newspaper industry have occurred in more recent years, with the advancement of digital publishing and use of the Internet, which resulted in the birth of electronic or online newspapers. In the following section an investigation will be made in the development of the three newspapers: *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* and their print versions, in addition to *Elnashra*.

6.3.1. The Development of *Annaharonline*

Annahar print version experienced a dramatic change in its design and content on 12 April, 2011⁸⁵. The new look of its Internet version, *Annaharonline*, described by *The Daily Star* as a ‘facelift and fresh new start’, included modern elements of navigation, more graphic elements for storytelling, and a more noticeably modern font. Priority was placed not only on photographs but also on headlines, with more focus on major news; although the tendency was still towards long articles, a tradition with *Annahar* editors, it was evident that an effort had been made to break up blocks of text with larger images. The new design of *Annahar* was led by award-winning American newspaper and magazine designer, Mario Garcia, who heads Garcia Media, and has worked with more than 500 news organisations over the last 40 years. He had also redesigned large publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Miami Herald* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Reuters, 2011).

⁸⁵ http://www.garciamedia.com/blog/an_nahar_one_week_later_follow_up
November 2014]

[retrieved 10

Annahar was probably not the first publication to invest its institutional ambitions in new design, but it was one of the first Lebanese newspapers to gamble with digital content. Tueni explained:

Annahar struggled to maintain a captive readership when nearly everyone under the age of 25 prefers scanning an I-Phone to reading a daily newspaper; for this reason, it was time for a change to attract more readers without repelling its existing audience (Skype: Wadih Tueni and researcher. Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014).

The main hidden target behind *Annahar*'s new look was to attract new readers which, in return, would encourage investment from new advertisers, thus increasing the income for the newspaper; survival of a newspaper is mainly based on selling copies and advertising⁸⁶.

Ghassan Hajjar, the editor-in-chief of *Annahar*, stated in an interview with the researcher:

Annahar also refreshed its content by creating new supplements which introduced lifestyle topics that enjoyed a more human aspect and involved all segments of society. The supplements had a different identity each day, focusing on simple everyday details, which are usually overlooked but are important for self-discovery and relaxation (interview: Ghassan Hajjar, Beirut, 9 October 2008).

It is worth noting that the new design and content of *Annahar* were launched during a time when most Arab countries were facing a change in their regimes, and rewriting their modern history. *Annahar*'s editorial clarified that 'the new look was meant to keep up with the times in form and content' (*The Daily Star*, April 2011). Garcia explained:

The new *Annahar* represents what a modern newspaper is all about. Readers of this legendary and well respected daily can now sample their familiar, trusted friend that is *Annahar*, with the modern elements of navigation, story hierarchy and added content that will help readers with their daily lives (*Reuters*, 2011).

Since its establishment on 1 January 1996, *Annahar*'s online version (www.annaharonline.com) could be accessed by the public in a PDF format; during that time, the Internet in Lebanon was developing slowly and not all the

⁸⁶ Evans, D., 2008. *The Economics of the Online Advertising Industry*: University College London and University of Chicago Law School, available at <http://www.intertic.org/Policy%20Papers/Evans.pdf> [retrieved 10 November 2014]

sections of the print newspaper could be read online; moreover, journalists were not familiar with working on computers. Wadih Tueni, the IT manager of *Annahar* explained:

These electronic[ally] sophisticated tools [the computers] were not available in all of the newspaper offices; accordingly, we [*Annahar*] organised many computer training sessions for our journalists, starting in the year 1996 (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008)

Annaharonline was fully dependent on its print counterpart, when it was first launched in 1996: however, it lacked any online department or journalists, and Tueni was the only employee working on the website. He explained:

Each day, I was responsible for creating the sub-pages, uploading the internal pages of the newspaper, updating the front page in addition to ameliorating the programmes and files; by 1 a.m. I would have uploaded all the content of the print copy (as it is, without any additional material) on the website where it was ready to be accessed by online readers (interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008)

Tueni's role could be described as 'a one-man show': someone who works on improving the software, setting the design, structuring the layout, and uploading the news on the newspaper's website; however, since this was the role of a technician rather than an online journalist, there was a need to hire online journalists, in order to add an extra flavour to the new version.

The ethnographic observations and interviews in 2008 revealed that *Annaharonline* had increased its staff members: in addition to Tueni as the IT Manager, eight more employees were hired: Two IT supporters and technicians, one graphic designer, three journalists for updating the news online and working on the layout, and finally, two presenters. The role of the presenters was to read the major headings of the news for those who understood and spoke Arabic, but could read it; however, with the launching of *Annahar* WebTV, three additional video journalists were recruited and trained to produce web videos to be daily uploaded on *Annaharonline* (Brewer, 2009).

Annaharonline witnessed major changes in design and content on its website since its establishment (Figure 6.1).



Source: A copy of front-page of Annaharonline on 17 January 2011



Source: A copy of front-page of Annaharonline on 17 June 2011



Source: A copy of front-page of *Annaharonline* on 19 July 2014

Figure 6.1: Three Samples of the Front page of *Annaharonline*

The three images above (6.1) illustrate the transition of *Annaharonline*, from a replica copy of the print paper (2011) in a simple and classical design, and the news easy to find and read:

Professionals agree that navigation tools in an online newspaper must be clear and easy to use, type must be easy to read and screen colours and formats must not get in the way of content and navigation information (Lowrey, 1999, p. 16).

An online department was opened in 2012, and produced an updated design and modern content of the newspaper. In its new format, *Annaharonline* added interactive content and a user-friendly layout extensively, while maintaining the high-quality news and analysis of the print version. The website also offered larger pictures, animated and breaking news, social news, videos, audio, static and motion pictures, a search engine and a viewer's poll; in this restructured version, readers were also given the opportunity to comment on the news. The

modernisation did not end there - another interactive feature was the presence of *Annaharonline* on the *Facebook* social media network. Diana Skaini, a journalist in *Annaharonline*, mentioned the importance of social media for online newspapers:

with the rise of the blogosphere, and more recently, social networking websites such as *Facebook*, *Annaharonline* has become more aware and has taken advantage of the potentials and attractiveness of these social media tools to develop and shape independent spaces for collective participation (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014).

Skaini stated that the news uploaded on the website is also updated on the *Facebook* page (<https://www.facebook.com/Annaharlb>). She summed it up by saying that ‘our audience can now follow us and interact with our news on *Facebook* as well as on *Annaharonline*’. The major developments of *Annaharonline*, from 1996 to 2012, are summarised in table 6.1 below:

Date	Developments
1996	<p><i>Annaharonline</i> - PDF format</p> <p>Content fully dependent on print copy</p> <p>Only 1 journalist - the IT manager of <i>Annahar</i></p>
2008	<p>Launched ‘WebTV’</p> <p>Eight more employees hired: Two IT supporters, technicians, one graphic designer, three journalists (online news updates and layout), two presenters</p> <p><i>Annaharonline</i> design simple and classical; news easy to find and read</p>
2012	<p>Independent online department launched, new online journalists and office staff employed</p> <p>Own space and offices</p> <p>Larger pictures, animated news, breaking news, social news, videos, audio, static and motion pictures, search engine and a political and social poll facility</p> <p>User-friendly design, interactive features – readers able to comment on news</p> <p>News updated on <i>Facebook</i> page</p>

Table 6.1: The Major Developments in *Annaharonline*

6.3.2. The Development of *Aldiyaronline*

A review of the history of *Aldiyar* and analysis of the notes taken from the researcher's ethnographic observations and interviews, did not reveal that *Aldiyar* had encountered any major technological changes since its establishment; while other Lebanese newspapers were searching for new technologies to financially support their newspapers (adding new supplements, launching online versions of their newspapers, creating new topics to target the youth audience, and so on) *Aldiyar* was more interested in praising the best-paying political party or person, in order to financially survive (Dajani, 2013), consequently, *Aldiyar* was one of the last newspapers in Lebanon to establish an online version.

Aldiyaronline was founded in 2004, as previously mentioned, and although online newspapers in Lebanon in that same year were adding exclusive news to their online versions that differentiated them from their print copies, *Aldiyar* uploaded the same content of its print version online; it was not long before *Aldiyar* imposed a subscription fee in an attempt to increase its income - *Aldiyar* was the first online Lebanese newspaper to require readers to pay for reading the same articles published in the print copy - but this idea did not meet with success - readers could access and read all other Lebanese newspapers free of charge. Chyi Iris Hsiang wrote:

Back in the mid 1990s, many news sites started by charging users a subscription fee for online news access, but most failed. The advertising model followed, only with limited success, for the effectiveness of online advertising remains questionable. Starting in 2000, the economic downturn caused a decline in online advertising revenue. On the other hand, e-commerce never fulfilled its promise. So a number of online news publishers have been reconsidering the subscription model as the last resort for survival. Some have readopted the model, and many more may follow suit (2004, pp. 1-2) .

The Lebanese online publishers ran the risk of losing their readers which they had vigorously tried to build up over the years, by adopting a subscription style; up to the date of this research (2014), all Lebanese online newspapers had therefore been accessed free of charge. *Aldiyar's* unsuccessful experience illustrates how Lebanese online readers are still not prepared to pay for their news, even though some online newspapers are reconsidering their options in order to survive.

The ethnographic interviews and observations of 2008-2009 disclosed that *Aldiyaronline*'s independent online department did not exist during that period. The newspaper organisation did not hire any additional journalists for its online version⁸⁷, however, it did invest in the present print journalists, by giving them extra 'online' duties, in addition to their daily 'print' routines - a move that uncovered a new phenomenon for *Aldiyar* journalists: they could instantly update their news and stories, online.

The researcher observed new and significant modifications had been made to *Aldiyaronline* between 2008-2014, each time she accessed the website. Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline* explained that '*Aldiyaronline* encountered many changes in the years 2008-2009 since it was a trial and experimental phase of the website' (Skype: Fadi Chami and researcher, Beirut-Canada, 20 March, 2014). *Aldiyaronline* finally created its own 'unique-content and rephrasing' style in 2013 which will be discussed in depth in the newsroom communication routine and production process in the following chapter. (The figure 6.2 below shows three samples of the front page of *Aldiyaronline*).



Source: Copy of front-page of *Aldiyaronline* on 17 January 2011

⁸⁷ Skype interview with Fadi Chami and researcher, Beirut-Canada, 20 March, 2014



Source: Copy of front-page of Aldiyaronline on 8 June 2011



Source: Copy of the front-page of *Aldiyaronline* on 19 July 2014

Figure 6.2: Three Samples of the Front page of *Aldiyaronline*

Figure 6.2 shows the substantial transformation that had taken place in the design of the three samples of *Aldiyaronline*. The aim of *Aldiyaronline* was to become more dynamic by offering additional information on a variety of topics, presenting more videos, uploading motion pictures, and creating supplementary interactive features (discussed in Chapter Eight). It is worth noting that, up to the date of this research (2014), *Aldiyaronline* still did not have a presence on social media - the

owner and founder of *Aldiyar* newspaper, Charles Ayoub, has a *Facebook* page where his last News Feed was uploaded on 28 September 2013⁸⁸.

The major developments of *Aldiyaronline* are summarised in table 6.2 below:

Date	Developments
In 2004	<i>Aldiyaronline</i> in PDF format replica or ‘shovelware’ copy of print version
In 2008	launched in HTML format did not hire additional online journalist(s) print version journalists uploaded print content online experimental phase of website subscription fee required to read its news content red boxes containing updated news covered front page
In 2009	online department launched independent journalists, staff, offices and equipment
In 2013	created ‘unique-content and rephrasing’ style

Table 6.2: The Major Developments in *Aldiyaronline*

6.3.3. The Development of *Elnashra*

Elnashra’s design and content encountered few changes since its establishment in 2007; these depended on the importance of the events and their influence on its main target, the Lebanese audience: in 2009 for example, the newspaper launched a page headed the ‘Lebanese Elections 2009’⁸⁹ which contained maps of the geographic distribution of the voters, accompanied by statistics and personal details (curricula vitae) of the candidates. The results of the 2009 campaign and the names of the winners were also published on this page. The ‘Lebanese Election page’ was very useful and a good source of information before, during, and after the election, however, a few months later, the page was removed as it had become

⁸⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/charles.ayoub.7?fref=ts> [retrieved 21 August 2014].

⁸⁹ <http://elnashra.com/elections/articles-1-2991.html#file> [retrieved 5 May 2009].

practically obsolete; the political events and chaos taking place in the Middle East replaced the election page.

The changes that *Elnashra* made since 2007, were minor and not very obvious to many of its daily readers; however, in June 2011, *Elnashra* underwent ‘cosmetic surgery’ in its design - larger pictures were added, using more solid colours; interactive features were included such as being able to contact the newspaper journalists and staff, applying flashier animation in main news and advertisements, and audio and video features; in July 2011, *Elnashra* born-on-the-web newspaper created its *Facebook* page⁹⁰. The social media page contained titles and pictures similar to those uploaded on the website, and web links that transferred the reader to *Elnashra*’s website to read more news - the content of the *Facebook* page was ‘shovelled’ (as Boczkowski, 2004, p.55 calls it) from the news website. *Elnashra*’s *Facebook* page followers had the option of commenting on news while being online - an interactive feature that newspapers lack - which will be discussed in Chapter Eight. (Figure 6.3 below, shows three different samples of the front page of *Elnashra*).

⁹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/Elnashra>



Source: Copy of the front page of *Elnashra* on 12 June 2011



Source: Copy of the front-page of *Elnashra* on 17 June 2011



Source: Copy of front-page of *Elnashra* on 17 July 2014

Figure 6.3: Three Samples of the Front Page of *Elnashra*

It is evident from the observation of Figure 6.3 above that *Elnashra* experienced many changes in its design between 2011 and 2014. Semaan, the editor-in-chief of *Elnashra* explains that the changes in *Elnashra* were applied after the establishment of the newspaper. A team of specialised staff and web designers had been working on the new design for eight months, even before the ‘Spring Revolt 2011’ in the Middle East started. He stated: ‘after four years of continuous success, it was time

for a new look that matches the international standards of online newspapers' (Skype: Joseph Semaan and researcher, Beirut-Canada, 21 May 2014). The major developments of *Elnashra* are summarised in table 6.3 below.

Date	Developments
In 2007	small pictures irregular updating of content throughout the day
In 2011	major changes took place: larger pictures more solid colours multimedia features such as video clips by artist Charbel Khalil ⁹¹ , included <i>Facebook</i> page created - included same news as website
In 2014	applied flashier animation in main news and advertisements news more regularly updated

Table 6.3: The Major Developments in *Elnashra*

It is worth mentioning that until April 2014, *Elnashra* lacked the option of commenting on its main news articles; it also excluded the web links to guide readers to other news stories and additional information; moreover, the option of buying or selling items such as houses, tickets, cars, electronics, and so on, did not exist at the time of this research, but, although *Elnashra* is a born-on-the-web newspaper, it had not adopted many interactive and multimedia options (discussed in Chapter Eight).

6.4. Chapter Summary

The analysis of documents obtained from the ethnographic observations and interviews conducted on two print newspapers and their electronic versions, and a born-on-the-web newspaper, has offered an understanding of the rationale and development of Lebanese online newspapers.

⁹¹ Charbil Khalil is a Lebanese comic and producer, available at: <http://www.charbelkhalil.com/>

The findings of this chapter indicate that the three online newspapers (*Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*) were launched in order to follow the current technological flow (*Aldiyaronline*), aiming at reaching a wider international audience (*Annaharonline*) by providing updated news to its readers in a modern way (*Elnashra*). Table 6.4 below summarises the features of *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

Description	<i>Annaharonline</i>	<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	<i>Elnashra</i>
Established	1996	2005	2007
Place of issue	Down Town, Beirut	Yarzeh	Furn El-Chebak
Initial format	PDF	PDF	HTML
Reasons for establishment	To reach immigrants and Lebanese Diaspora	To follow modern technology; not to be left behind	To present the latest news in a simple, fast and subscription-free way
Language	Arabic	Arabic	Arabic
New Design and Content	12 December 2012	2013	June 2011
Number of journalists in 2014	6	12	21

Table 6.4: Description of *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*

The ethnographic interviews and observations revealed other factors, however, which were not articulated directly or openly by the respondents: the appearance of additional rationales behind the launching and development of an online newspaper in Lebanon; to the technological flow, media competition and reaching the Lebanese Diaspora must be added the Arab revolts and the use of social media, as elements that also played major roles in the development of these newspapers. The findings of this research support Jad Melki et al.'s report (2012) entitled *Mapping Digital Media: Lebanon*, which stated:

Three major political events since 2005, greatly influenced every aspect of Lebanon's media: the 2005 assassination of the Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, and the major political realignments, shifts in power, and turmoil that followed; the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon; and the recent [2012] popular uprisings throughout the Arab world (Melki et al., 2012, p. 10).

The report concluded:

many of the changes and trends (in the Lebanese media) were more likely due to these political events, the poor state of the economy, and the 1975–1990 civil war that shaped most of the post-1990 period, rather than the media shift from analog to digital (Melki et al., 2012, p. 10).

The slow development of online newspapers in Lebanon seemed to be influenced by ‘political events’ (Melki et al., 2012, p. 10): *Aldiyar* launched its online edition in 2004, when the assassination of Lebanese political and journalistic figures have just started, *Elnashra* was established after July War 2006 and *Annaharoline* was born after the Lebanese civil war; moreover, although the editors-in-chief and journalists who were interviewed did not claim it directly, the recent Arab revolts and the use of social media by many youth as a news platform⁹² was seen as a new competitor in the online news world; in order to meet the modern digital demands, *Annaharoline*, *Aldiyaroline* and *Elnashra* had to adopt major changes in their design and content since 2011 - the year which marked the uprising of the Arab revolt⁹³.

The economic and financial crisis caused by the political events had negative effects on the newspaper industry in Lebanon; it increased the price of newsprint and decreased its advertising revenues; however, rather than developing their online versions to meet international standards, Lebanese newspapers focused on their own financial problems; none of the editors-in-chief or owners thought that the online version would contribute to the promotion of their print copy; a fallacy in hindsight, since by launching an online version, the number of readers and advertisers would increase and therefore augment the newspaper’s finances. *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* chose to use different strategies to overcome their financial problems, such as reducing the overhead costs by cutting the salaries or laying-off many journalists and employees, imposing a subscription fee, and accepting

⁹² ‘Arab Revolt: Social media and the people’s revolution’, available at: <http://www.channel4.com/news/arab-revolt-social-media-and-the-peoples-revolution> [retrieved 15 November 2014]

⁹³ Day E., 2011. ‘The slap that saved sparked a revolution’, *the Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/15/arab-spring-tunisia-the-slap> [retrieved 18 November 2014]

money from political parties and businessmen; for example, the family-owned newspaper, *Annahar*, had to sell its shares to other political people and businessmen in order to cover its expenses⁹⁴. *Aldiyar*'s owner, Charles Ayoub, confessed, more than once, in his writings, that his newspaper was passing through a difficult financial situation and that he was receiving money from different Arab countries and political parties⁹⁵; this had a twofold effect: financial support in exchange for using the media as a means to express personal agenda:

Since both print and audio-visual (Lebanese) media outlets are not financially self-sufficient, they are predisposed to accept financial assistance from outside sources, including foreign entities, in exchange for editorial support. This allows foreign and business interests to use the media as a vehicle by which to present their agendas and exert influence on internal and regional affairs (Nabil Dajani, 2013, p. 3).

The primary objective of making a profit or finding new ways of increasing revenue, through their online versions, was not of great importance to most of the early adopters of online publishing in Lebanon.

The Lebanese newspapers started their online versions by uploading the same content of the print newspaper in a PDF format (see Chapter Five); however, Krumsvik maintained:

A year after the birth of online newspapers, the proportions were still so comfortably on the side of the mother publications that the introduction of online newspapers was perceived as no threat to their financial situation. But as usage of online publications has reached a critical mass, the large media companies have been busy developing their online editions as supplementary products and not substitutes (2006, p. 286).

This chapter argued that innovation is widely dispersed throughout media firms and intrinsic to many everyday tasks; however, the studied Lebanese newspapers frequently failed to master the challenges presented by technological innovations that revolutionised their sector of industry, 'leaving the field open to new entrants' (Hill and Rothaermel, 2003). The Lebanese online newspapers have recently seen

⁹⁴ 'The Future of Annahar', 2006, available at: http://beirutnotes.blogspot.com/2006/02/future-of-annahar_15.html [retrieved 18 November 2014]

⁹⁵ Dajani, N., 2013. 'The Myth of Media Freedom in Lebanon', *Arab Media and Society*, Summer, Issue 18, pp.4-5.

a continuous stream of fundamental changes to the technologies used to develop and deliver news content; yet the 'need' to adopt and adapt to these technologies came unplanned to most Lebanese print and online newspapers: this need was born out of the necessity to follow the modern trend by adjusting to changing technologies and the fear of 'being left behind'.

Lucy Kung (2008) (cited in Cinzia Dal Zotto and Hans Van Kranenburg's book, *Management and Innovation in the Media Industry*) says:

current developments, while dramatic, need to be viewed as situated on a historical continuum. Each of the sectors that together comprise the media industry relied on a technological development to bring it to life and has had to adapt to subsequent technological advances within this field (pp.7-8) .

The media industry therefore owes its existence to technological advance, and, from a historical perspective, technological change is an organic constant feature of the life of media industry.

A comparative study of innovation management across multiple industries, conducted by Day and Schoemaker (2000) found that managers should do the following when they are faced with emerging and potentially disruptive technologies: (i) evaluate the technology;(ii) decide whether, when and how aggressively to commit to it; (iii) decide how to develop a new technology-based product (or service) for an entirely new market; and finally, (iv) decide on how to design the organisation to accomplish these tasks in such a way as to ensure that the organisation would stay competitive in the new environment created by the technology.

Based on Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory, discussed in Chapter Three, the findings presented in this chapter revealed that the editors-in-chief of the three Lebanese online newspapers, remained, for a long time, in the trial stage; until recently, the Lebanese online newspapers were still encountering many changes in their design and content as online editors and journalists were tardy in applying new technologies to their media industries: the data discussed and presented in this research showed that the online newspapers fall between the 'late majority' and the 'laggards' categories; although the Lebanese in general, are known for being

the first to adapt to new technologies in comparison to other Middle East countries, when it comes to online news they were arguably over-cautious. The reason for this, may be related to the fear of investing in a new media field, especially as they were (and are) still facing financial problems as explained earlier in this chapter; however, rather than evaluating their situation and deciding on how to adapt to, and adopt, this new technology, as the study of Day and Schoemaker (1994) suggested, the Lebanese editors-in-chief were, instead, engaged in looking for solutions to their political and financial problems, and unable to see the solution that possibly lay beyond their immediate problems.

The tipping point is marked by opinion leader adoption. Well-informed opinion leaders communicate their approval or disapproval of an innovation, based on the innovators' experiences, relative to the rest of the social system. The majority responds by rapidly adopting. This analysis suggests that the spread of an innovation hinges on a surprisingly small point: namely, whether or not opinion leaders vouch for it (Orr, 2003).

The history of online newspapers has not only been short, but has also been influenced by accelerated technological developments; as a result, the Lebanese online newspapers have been trying to adopt and adapt to many of these modern technologies which would give them an advantage over the print medium; nevertheless, their digital design still mimics the print edition (Lowrey, 1999; Bockowski, 2004; Krumsvik, 2006).

Online newspapers have often been seen as having the power to radically transform the news industry (Spyridou and Veglis, 2008), but the Lebanese online newspapers have been hesitant in developing their unique boundaries in terms of design, technology, editing policies, and levels of interaction. One of the reasons behind this cautious approach is their starting point; according to Spyridou and Veglis, newspapers were not able to articulate their mission when they first transitioned to an online format. The three Lebanese newspapers went online as a defensive act, as previously explained in this chapter, rather than an active approach to adapt to rapidly developing technological advances; eventually, as web presence became a necessity in the process of modernisation, many newspapers went online as there was no other option (Krumsvik, 2006).

Esther Dyson, the editor of *Release 1.0*, a technology newsletter at CNET Networks, online newspapers must be clear about their goals and what they are trying to accomplish; they also need to know how to positively achieve them (Chyi & Sylvie, 2000; Outing, 2000; Pavlik 2001). She asked:

Are you a media company, tailoring content to reach an audience and sell ad[vertisement]s? Or are you a journalistic enterprise, focused on finding out and publicizing important truths? If you do not really know what you are trying to do, then you keep disappointing people who think they understand.

The data presented in this research also showed that the development process of the Lebanese online newspapers passed through three stages: (a) repurposing print content for the online edition (a replica edition); based on the information discussed in this chapter, this stage lasted 16 years in *Annaharonline* (from 1996 - 2012) and 8 years in *Aldiyaronline* (from 2005 - 2013); (b) content is augmented with interactive features, such as hyperlinks and search engines. *Annaharonline* started adopting and adapting to this stage on 12 December 2012, *Aldiyaronline* included interactive features to its website in 2013, and *Elnashra* became more interactive in 2011; (c) the creation of original news content designed specifically for the new medium. The three online newspapers were (and are) trying to adopt new levels of interactivity and multimedia features to their content and design (to be discussed in Chapter Eight).

The findings of this research support the analysis of the transformation of online news of Eric Bucy (2004). He argued that ‘the first generation of web news (in the early to mid–1990s), was uninspired, producing simple hypertext pages that redistributed print material’, applicable to *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*. ‘The second generation of web news (from the mid–1990s to the end of the decade) moved online journalism to a more independent footing, engaging in original news gathering and production; continuous updates became more common, streaming audio and video appeared, online news became more visual and in-depth, and interactive chats and online discussions emerged creating news communities’ (Spyridou and Veglis, 2008); however, by the late 1990s, it became obvious among new media circles that the rapidly evolving state of online news entailed considerable experimentation with content, technology and distribution;

consequently, the industry witnessed frequent changes and often radical site redesigns (Dibean and Garrison, 2001).

The ethnographic observations and interviews discussed in this chapter have provided the answers to the following research questions: Why have newspapers in Lebanon launched online versions? How are the three Lebanese online newspapers under study, adapting to the new media technologies?

In conclusion, discussing the rationale and development of the Lebanese online newspapers showed that all three studied newspapers were trying to adopt and adapt to new technologies. Online newspapers are characterised by enhanced features that use technology to bring people closer to news, but this process was prolonged in the case of Lebanon; by 2014, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* had evolved from a non-interactive, passive model of information delivery into an environment of increased immediacy, and content richness.

The following chapter will display and analyse the information related to the communication routines and production process in the three Lebanese newspaper newsrooms.

Chapter Seven: Newsroom Routines and Production

Process of the Studied Newspapers

7.1. Introduction

The newspaper business has undergone revolutionary changes over the past 10 years, due, in large part, to the growth of the Internet. One of the changes to the business model of news organisations involved the way reporters operated on a day-to-day basis - 'newsroom communication routines' or 'journalists' routines' - defined as 'those patterned, routinized, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs' (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996, p. 105); according to Reese (2001), the 'journalists' routine is a natural structure within which the creative work of journalism is done'. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) found that this process actually consisted of three areas: media workers, audience members, and sources, all of which are interconnected in the production of news. Journalists, reporters and editors are inundated with potential news items from many different sources, on a daily basis; consequently, they established different routines for the various types of news; however, since most news events are unscheduled, it has to be classified into one of five categories: soft news, hard news, spot news, developing news and continuing news. Journalists must be able to quickly assess the category, make decisions, and suitably cover the events - Tuchman (1973, 1978) named this procedure 'news typification'. Certain routines are adopted by journalists when deciding what constitutes a news story, and choosing what to write about in the course of their jobs, and therefore, become the first step in the gatekeeping process (Shoemaker and Vos, 2009); this not only involves publishing a daily print newspaper, but also regularly updating the online version. Journalists and reporters of both print and online newspapers are responsible for filling a news gap every day, regardless of whether it has been eventful news-wise or not; for this reason, routines were developed, in part, to help economise, but also to simplify and organise this process (Sigal, 1973; Tuchman, 1978).

Three different routines are used by journalists in order to execute their jobs. One of the primary routines is the 'beat system' (Moritz (2012, pp.4-7) in which a

reporter is assigned to cover the same group, organisation or geographic area on a regular basis (Hallman, 2005; Meyers, 1992; Sanchez, 2007); in his observational study of journalists, Fishman (1980, p. 28) wrote that beats have an organisational history that outlives any one reporter; that reporters are assigned beats by their superiors but that they do not own their beats; and the beat is an ‘object of reporting’ activities outside the newsroom. Reporters on a beat are also obliged to produce news every day, and rely heavily on a few sources for their information. Fishman (1980) concluded that the beat system is ingrained within the newspaper industry, to the point that a newspaper that does not have a beat structure, lies far outside the norm. Another important routine for journalists is the ‘notion of sources’, from which a reporter obtains news and narrative ideas from those they interview for their stories. Reporters usually rely on official sources within their stories, including government officials, business leaders and news agencies; moreover, ‘the use of sources’ is an important routine in terms of maintaining objectivity (Meyers, 1992; Hallman, 2005; Sanchez, 2007). Deadlines, in conjunction with the beat system and sources, are one of the most important routines for journalists, especially for print edition newspapers; however, in most Lebanese online newspapers, the routine does not really exist, since news is continuously uploaded on the website (discussed later in this chapter). This chapter will present data arising from observations of the beat system, the source, and the deadline of the newsroom routine of two print newspapers, and their online counterparts, in addition to a born-on-the-web newspaper. Discussing the newsroom routine has provided significant information about the relationships that exist between the newsrooms of print and online editions, in terms of their production processes, and should answer the following research question: How did the three Lebanese online newspapers under study, adapt to new technologies in their work routine, production process and employment criteria?

It is important to mention here that, during the ethnographic interviews and observations made in 2008 and 2014 at the online newsrooms of *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*, close collaborative relationships were found to exist between the staff members of the print and online editions, in terms of their working

routines and production processes this noticeable collaborative process helped to explain the way news content was produced and transmitted; on the other hand, born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*, had a different journalistic routine since it did not descend from a print parent.

7.2. The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of *Annaharonline*

The headquarters of *Annahar* print newspaper was initially located in ‘Souk El-Tawileh’, Beirut, Lebanon, but, in 2004, the newspaper offices moved to a new modern building in Downtown, an area of the capital city, with a magnificent view of the Mediterranean Sea; the online department did not yet exist, when the researcher visited *Annahar* in 2008 to conduct her ethnographic observations and interviews. A table was positioned outside the IT department (the office of IT manager, Wadih Tueni) with some computers on it – ostensibly *Annaharonline*’s ‘newsroom’. The newspaper owner and editors were not aware that news websites required their own newsroom premises and equipment, and a dedicated team of journalists, reporters, administrative staff, and so on; this makeshift arrangement was made as *Annahar* was facing financial problems at that time, and had already dismissed many of its print newspaper journalists; purchasing new equipment and hiring new staff for the online section of the newspaper was not possible on the limited budget. Tueni, as IT manager, and eight additional staff members operated the online website: two IT supporters and technicians, one graphic designer, three administrative staff for updating the online news and preparing the layout, and two presenters. The main roles of the employees in *Annaharonline*, in 2008, were to upload the same print content online, update the breaking news headline located on the left corner of the front page, and upload a single video onto WebTV.

Everette and Ash (2001, p. 26) and Fitzgerald (1997, p. 7) agreed:

at some newspapers, for example, perhaps two or three employees were added to the company payroll, and then given the job of shovelling ‘print’ stories on to the web once the publication went to press or trying to sell advertising for the online edition;

for others, ‘the website was deemed so ‘non-central’ that ‘it became the responsibility of the firm’s marketing department, or was farmed out to a third-party vendor’ (Chan-Olmsted and Ha, 2003, pp. 597-617).

Diana Skaini, an online journalist in *Annaharonline*, explained:

the online department was launched with the new design of the website on 12 December 2012. Since then, *Annaharonline* has [had] its own content which is different from the print version. Although the news website is independent, in the sense that it has its own journalists, newsroom routines, and deadlines, we are in constant contact and cooperation with the print journalists and staff (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014)

Wadih Tueni stated that the online department was located in the same main building of *Annahar* print newspaper, and on the same floor as the IT department, but on the opposite side of the building. The open-plan area for the online department, formed the newsroom communication work space of *Annaharonline*. Skaini stated that:

there are always six members of staff or journalists at their desks in the online department. Although there is no exact physical contact between the print editorial staff and the online editorial staff in their working processes, there is a collaborative relationship in sharing news resources between the two newsrooms [...]. [A]ny reader of the print and online version of *Annahar* can notice that *Annaharonline* relies upon the contents from the print edition. Yet we have our own social, scientific, economic, health, art and beauty news stories [for example] (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014).

The online department in *Annahar* largely depended on the print edition for news, however, none of the online journalists, staff, or webmaster attended the editorial news meeting in the morning; therefore, the deadline of the online news routine, which is usually agreed on in the editorial news meeting, is different from the print one (Table 7.1. presents the working routines of *Annahar* and *Annaharonline*).

<i>Annahar</i>	<i>Annaharonline</i>
<p>Editorial news meeting in the morning</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Collecting, reporting and writing news, articles and reports</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Sending news and reports to the newspaper</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Editorial desk staff transfers the news stories to the editor or sub-editor for rewriting or editing</p> <p>↓</p> <p>News transferred to the pagination desk for layout</p> <p>↓</p> <p>News sent for printing</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Newspaper distributed</p>	<p>News from the print copy updated on the website at 1 a.m.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>During the day and in three shifts:</p> <p>From 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. from 2 p.m. - 9 p.m. from 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.</p> <p>Online journalists write news</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Edit and proofread the news</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Upload the news on the website</p>

Table 7.1: Working Routines in *Annahar* and *Annaharonline*

Table 7.1 above shows that the production process of electronic newspapers is shorter than that of its print editions. Editor-in-chief, Ghassan Hajjar, pointed out:

journalists working for the print copy of *Annahar* use a special computer system that was designed to facilitate their work. They can write their reports in the comfort of their own homes and then send their work to my email address, where I, sitting in my office, edit and send them, ready to be printed [...]. [T]here is no doubt that this method eases the work of both print and online journalists. It also combines young journalists who are skilled in the use of technology with older journalists who barely know the basics of computers and prefer to write rather than type their articles (interview: Ghassan Hajjar: Beirut, 9 October 2008).

The main role of *Annaharonline* was to receive material that had been selected and edited by the print newsroom. The online journalists then wrote up and edited their own exclusive news and articles, and uploaded them on to the website. Skaini said:

being computer literate is one of the main qualities required for hiring an online journalist. A journalist working in *Annaharonline* must know the basic elements for using the computer and the Internet, such as searching the web, sending emails and typing articles etc. (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014).

Reine Abu Moussa, another online journalist in *Annaharonline*, pointed out:

since journalists write and upload their own news on the website, *Annaharonline* provided training sessions on how to use the online software to upload news, pictures and audio (Skype: Reine Abu Moussa and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

Regarding the ‘notion of sources’ in the newsroom routine, Abu Moussa explained:

our main source for the news published on *Annaharonline* is the *Annahar* print newspaper and the news provided by the journalists, reporters and editors working there. We also depend on news agencies and our private sources (Skype: Reine Abu Moussa and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

The deadline for newsrooms to complete their work, as previously stated, is a crucial factor. *Annahar*’s deadline for its print edition was between the afternoon and the evening, in order to prepare for the following day’s edition; however, Abu Moussa pointed out:

there is no specific deadline in an online newspaper. The only deadline is in the early morning, after the print edition is out to be printed. However, news is updated and uploaded on to the website throughout the whole day (Skype: Reine Abu Moussa and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

It can be concluded from the above that the majority of the content of *Annaharonline* is provided by its print newsroom, and furthermore, the newsrooms of the print and online edition shared the same information sources: *Annaharonline* used print content which had been initially selected, shaped and passed through the print news gate. The deadline for *Annahar* was fixed for early in the morning, while there was no specific deadline for the online version: it actually depended on the importance of the events taking place on that day. *Annaharonline* operated different production processes than its print counterpart.

Journalists working in the online department were obliged to have good computer skills which did not appear to be a priority in the print newspaper department. Finally, the working routine of the online newsroom followed the same rules and news policies of the print *Annahar*.

7.3. The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of *Aldiyaronline*

Aldiyar newspaper is located in an old building in Yarzeh, a village in Baabda District, southeast of Beirut, and has been since its inception in 1988 (Kamalipour Y. and Mowlana H., 1994). The area includes the Lebanese Ministry of Defence headquarters and the Lebanese Military Museum⁹⁶. When the researcher visited the newspaper during her ethnographic interviews and observations in 2008, there was no trace of any ‘online department’ or ‘online journalist’.

The launching of online newspapers presents two options: either to hire a few additional journalists to work on the online version or to increase the daily tasks performed by the existing journalists. *Aldiyar* chose not to hire any additional employees for its online version, established in 2004, but decided to incorporate the online version into the print one by adding extra ‘online’ duties to their daily ‘print’ routines. *Aldiyar* journalists were suddenly faced with a new medium on which to update their news and stories, although most of the journalists working there were not familiar with the use of computers and the Internet [Interview: Najwa Maroun, Beirut, 4 November 2008]. Aspray and Ceruzzi confirmed this observation:

In print and broadcast newsrooms, journalists who have been trained in one craft are now being asked to create content for distribution platforms with which they have little familiarity, leading to more workplace stress (2008).

Najwa Maroun, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyar*, explained:

although the print journalists are playing the role of an online journalist, in addition to their daily journalistic chores, their routine is less stressful when compared to journalists working in another mass media. This is because *Aldiyaronline* does not require regular updating of its pages as other online newspapers do. As a result, journalists upload news, articles and photos once a

⁹⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yarzeh> [retrieved 17 November 2014]

day, as soon as the print version is ready to be published and distributed. This is mainly the only new task added to the daily chores of the journalists. Therefore, the print journalists are left with plenty of time during the day to prepare reports, conduct interviews, and write news stories and articles for the print edition (interview, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008).

A year after the researcher's visit to *Aldiyar*, the online department became a separate entity. Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline* declared:

the online department became fully independent from the print version in 2009. During that year, *Aldiyaronline* had 77 employees; however, due to the bad economic situation that Lebanon in general, and *Aldiyar* in particular, were facing, the newspaper decided to cut the number to 15 employees. We have 12 online journalists (10 women and 2 men), an IT person, an editor-in-chief and a person responsible for the IP address... [at present]... (Skype interview from Canada with Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014).

The online department of *Aldiyar* had its own space located on the first floor of the newspaper's building, which has become the newsroom for the online version, and its own dedicate staff members.

Aldiyaronline searched for certain specific criteria, in the process of hiring new journalists to work in its online department. Chami asserted that journalists with good computer skills were given priority to work in *Aldiyaronline*. He added:

most of our online journalists are fresh graduates with a journalistic, political or Arabic literature educational background; however, the journalist applying for a job at *Aldiyaronline* must be familiar with the search tools on the Internet: he or she must be capable of typing an article, uploading it online, attaching a picture, an audio or a video to it, and be able to edit it later (Skype interview from Canada with Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014).

The online version had encountered many changes in its design and content since its establishment, as discussed previously in the 'development of *Aldiyar* and *Aldiyaronline*', Chami recalled that at first the content of the online version was the same as that of the print newspaper (a replica); according to Chami, *Aldiyaronline* remained an experimental newspaper until 2013, when the online newspaper decided to follow the 'unique-content and rephrasing' style. Chami explained:

'unique content' are stories written originally for the online version; that is, they are not found in the print newspaper. We also rephrase and edit the same articles and news published in the print version before uploading them on to the website

(Skype interview from Canada with Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014).

Chami added that *Aldiyar* was still in the process of adopting new technologies to its online version. He revealed that on Sunday, 23 March 2014, the readers of *Aldiyar* would be able to access the newspaper from their cell phones via a special application (Skype interview from Canada with Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2014).

Najwa Maroun, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyar*, explained that the process of producing the daily newspaper of *Aldiyar* began with a meeting with the paper's editors who determined the amount of editorial copy in an issue, based on the advertising space that had already been sold. A specific number of pages were agreed upon, and the editorial assignments were made to the various departments. The section of national and international news, generally the first part of the paper, was compiled from stories electronically transmitted by correspondents, usually via a computer modern, to their editor to be checked; sometimes the editor rewrote them or increased or decreased the content; additional stories of importance were compiled from wire services and international news agencies such as *United Press International*, *Associated Press*, and *Reuters* (interview, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008). (Table 7.2 presents the working routine in *Aldiyar* and *Aldiyaronline*).

<i>Aldiyar</i>	<i>Aldiyaronline</i>
<p><u>Collection process</u>: the newspaper collects the information from its journalists and reporters</p> <p>↓</p> <p><u>Selection process</u>: Journalists select, write and edit the news</p> <p>↓</p> <p><u>Print process</u>: the pages of the newspaper are designed, printed and distributed to the readers.</p>	<p>Two shifts:</p> <p>(a) 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.</p> <p>(b) 4 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. (or 12.00 midnight)</p> <p>Online journalists receive the selected material from the print newsroom</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Edit and rephrase print version news.</p> <p>Write new exclusive stories</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Upload the news on the newspaper website</p>

Table 7.2: Working Routine in *Aldiyar* and *Aldiyaronline*

Table 7.2 above shows that the working routine of the print version of *Aldiyar* passes through three processes: collecting, selecting and printing. According to Mohammad El-Hani, an online journalist in *Aldiyaronline*, the production process of *Aldiyaronline* starts early in the morning by rephrasing and then uploading the content of the print newspaper, online, followed by each online journalist conducting his or her own research by reading local and international print newspapers, to give the journalist a clear idea about the events taking place on that day. He elaborated:

as soon as I am aware of the subject I am planning to write about, I will discuss it with the editor-in-chief. He or she will guide me on the focal aspects for my story. After I finish writing my news story and attaching the appropriate picture or video, I send the journalistic material to the editor-in-chief for editing. As soon as I get his approval on the content and multimedia used, I immediately upload my work on to the *Aldiyaronline* website (Skype interview: Mohammad El-Hani and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014)

Chami further clarified:

in the case of the article tackling some debatable political issues, the final decision goes back to the founder of *Aldiyar*, Charles Ayoub... [Chami added]...we barely have such cases, since our journalists are fully aware of the political and ethical policy of *Aldiyar*; in other words, the online journalists in *Aldiyaronline* can freely express their political views in their writings, on one condition that they will respect the newspaper's policy and will not assault any political or religious figure (Skype interview: Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014)

Raja Mihtar, a journalist in the online department, explained that *Aldiyaronline* depended on the print newspaper as a main source for its news. He stated:

the reporters and journalists of the print newspapers provide us with the majority of the news. We also gather and select our international news and pictures from news agencies; however, the videos uploaded on the website are extracted from Youtube (Skype interview: Raja Mihtar and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014)

There appears to be a very close collaborative relationship between print and online staff in terms of face-to-face and network contact. The editorial staff of both editions continually share conversations and work resources with each other.

Finally, while the deadlines of *Aldiyar* print edition are strict, in order to allow sufficient time for the printing and distribution process to occur early next day, *Aldiyaronline*'s deadline is very flexible. Chami recalled:

23 years ago, the content of *Aldiyar* print was glued on to a piece of paper; then the copy was sent to another department to delineate the letters before it ...[was]... finally ready to be printed on the printing press. This process was even more complicated during the war, when the journalists used to write the content of the newspaper in Hazmieh (9.3 km from Beirut), the filming of the newspaper in Dawra (5.9 km from Beirut) and the delineation in Bir Hasan (4 Km from Beirut). In other words, the same newspaper required three different geographical areas to be formed and printed... [he added:] ... with the birth of the Internet and new technologies, the news of an online newspaper, for example, can be updated anytime from anywhere and by anyone (Skype interview from Canada with Fady Chami, the editor-in-chief of *Aldiyaronline*, *Aldiyar* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 20 March 2014).

In conclusion, although *Aldiyaronline* has its unique news, its main news material is still provided by the print version, which *Aldiyaronline* amends and reworks before uploading it online, as part of its production process. *Aldiyar*'s deadlines are fixed, while those for the online version are flexible – the online news is frequently updated during the day; consequently, it can be argued that *Aldiyaronline* operates different production processes from its print counterpart, therefore, journalists working in *Aldiyar*'s online department were required to

have advanced computer skills in order to competently perform their tasks. Finally, while the working routine of the print newsroom was to collect, select and print the news, the online newsroom routine was based mainly on collecting the news from the print version, and uploading a reworked piece of unique content.

7.4. The Newsroom Routines and Production Process of *Elnashra*

Elnashra was launched in a small flat located on the first floor of an old residential building in Furn El-Chebbak, a city around three kilometres from Downtown Beirut, and consisted of editorial, technical and administrative departments. The editorial department comprised of: an editor-in-chief, an assistant editor, eleven editors, six reporters, four writers, a translator, two photographers and two cameramen, overseen by the chief executive officer (CEO). The technical department included a technical director, a system administrator, four developers, two technical supporters and four technicians; and finally, the administrative department was led by a commercial and a financial director (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008)

Elnashra, as a born-on-the-web newspaper, lacked a print version, and was fully aware that journalists working in an online newsroom must possess certain additional skills such as fast typing, computer literacy, familiarity with various languages, the Internet and search tools.

New skills are added to the professional role of journalists while traditional skills might be altered or even discarded. The traditional skills such as specialized, investigative beat reporting and deadline sensitivity have been downplayed and replaced by immediacy in reporting, multi-skilling and multi-tasking, copy-paste mentality and 24/7 deadlines (Steensen, 2009, p. 702)

Steen Steensen added:

online journalism is often marked by an attempt to establish new normative demands for the practice of journalism rather than building on traditional journalistic skills and craftsmanship' (Steensen, 2009, p. 704)

Ziad Saadeh, head of an editorial team in *Elnashra*, believed that there is a big difference between an online and an offline journalist. He explained:

an online newspaper is a dynamic place to work in. Speed in looking for and writing the news is very important; therefore, an online journalist must be smart, quick and

attentive to any information that may draw his or her attention, whether in a newspaper, a news agency, a TV programme or a radio station; moreover, a 'scoop' is a peculiarity of an online newspaper. In fact, successful online journalists have to keep their eyes and ears wide open for anything happening around them (Interview: Ziad Saadeh, Beirut, 9 September 2008).

Laurie Petersen, former editor-in-chief of *Cowles News Media*, once said:

online journalists must have all the skills of those in other media: good interviewing skills, solid research capabilities, tenacity, speed, accuracy, flexibility, a good detector and crisp and vivid writing (Lasica, 1997).

In order to make sure that these qualifications were found in the journalist applying for a job at *Elnashra*, its editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, clarified that every journalist working on the news website should pass a written and oral examination, in addition to an internship period. Semaan explained:

the exam consists of three parts. In the first part, the journalist is given a detailed press release and he or she has to summarise and edit it to suit an online newspaper. This exercise will clarify whether the journalist understands the news, identifies the important factors and is able to summarise it quickly, using the right grammar and terms; in the second part, the journalist is given an article written in English and another in French, and is asked to translate it into Arabic and vice versa. This indicates if the journalist is capable of understanding articles written in different languages and can translate them to Arabic, the main language of *Elnashra*; finally, the journalist is subjected to a general information test such as names of known presidents, capitals, flags and places in the world, Middle East and Lebanon. Passing the three parts of the exam indicates that the journalist has the minimum general information required for an online journalist (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008)

After the journalist had passed the three written examinations, he⁹⁷ underwent an internship for two weeks; during this practical training, the journalist is taught how to upload news, audio, images and articles on to the *Elnashra* main page; when the editors were satisfied that the new journalist was competent and able to work online by himself, he was given a password to log on to the administration page; although the journalist was officially an *Elnashra* employee throughout this introductory period under the supervision of another more experienced editor, he uploaded material on to a trial website, which was similar to *Elnashra*'s main design, but was not accessible to the public. The journalist had to convince the editor that he was competent to work independently on the main page of *Elnashra* (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008).

⁹⁷ In this section, 'he' may also mean 'she', unless otherwise specified

The journalists working on the morning shift in the *Elnashra* newsroom were responsible for skim reading the main pages of the Lebanese and Arab newspapers distributed in Lebanon, as part of their routine; they copied and pasted the important headlines and exclusive news to *Elnashra's* website, after having perused the news of ten Lebanese newspapers on a daily basis (including two English language editions and a French one)⁹⁸.

The morning shift journalists extracted the articles written by popular authors and journalists after having updated the 'newspaper's headlines' page, and uploaded them under the category 'Chosen Articles'. They also updated the 'Translated Articles' category; this procedure was followed by the journalists checking the news agencies' web pages for important news, in order to update the main page of *Elnashra*. They also monitored the news broadcast on the TV channels and from radio channels. The afternoon shift journalists arrived at around 1 p.m. and continued with the tasks begun by the morning shift: by that time, press releases were being held, politicians were on duty, and events were being scheduled (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008).

The journalists on the evening shift were mainly responsible for uploading the editorials of the Lebanese television stations around 8:30 p.m. They also updated the news, monitored events taking place and checked *Elnashra's* email for any exclusive news sent by the audience or friends. The work routine in *Elnashra* is summarised in the table 7.3 below.

⁹⁸ *Elnashra* covers the following newspapers: *Annahar*, *El-Akhbar*, *The Daily Star* (the only English newspaper), *El-Anwar*, *L'Orient Le Jour* (the only French newspaper), *Al-Balad*, *Al-Safir*, *Almoustaqbal*, *Al-Hayat* and *El-Sharq El-Awsat*. The list lacks three Lebanese newspapers *Aldiyar*, *Al-Liwaa* and *El-Bayraa*, available at: <http://www.elnashra.com/newspapers/> [retrieved 18 May 2009]

Shifts	Work Routine
<u>Morning shift</u> : 5 a.m.to 1 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - journalists skim read main pages of Lebanese and Arab newspapers - copy and paste important headlines and exclusive news to <i>Elnashra</i>'s website - search for important news to update the main page
<u>Afternoon shift</u> : 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue morning shift tasks
<u>Evening shift</u> : 4 p.m. to 12 midnight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upload Lebanese television editorials - update the news - monitor recent events - check <i>Elnashra</i>'s email for exclusive news sent by audience and friends

Source: *Elnashra* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008

Table 7.3: The work routine of *Elnashra*

The editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, set the timetable of the journalists each week. He also allocated a journalist from the editorial team to 'head the shift'. This journalist would be responsible for all the information updated on the website during his shift. He also monitored the work and decisions taken by the journalists concerning which news to include or exclude (*Elnashra* newsroom, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008).

Deadlines in an online newspaper are called 'the online news stress', according to Hussein Assy, the assistant editor of *Elnashra*. He explained:

every minute is considered as a deadline for uploading news on our website. This creates a huge stress on the online journalist whose responsibility is to search for the information, check for its credibility, and upload it before any other mass media [...] the intensity of the stress in *Elnashra* depends on the news and the importance of the events taking place (Interview: Hussein Assy, Beirut, 8 September 2014)

He added: 'there are always important events taking place in the world, however, in the Middle East and Lebanon specifically, then the deadline and stress that comes with it are continuous'. It is a rare phenomenon that journalists working for *Elnashra* do not have to update an item or write about an event; on the contrary, the role of journalists in a print newspaper only ended when each had written his

article or conducted his interviews (Interview: Hussein Assy, Beirut, 8 September 2014).

In conclusion, this section shows that the born-on-the-web, *Elnashra*, is an organised online newspaper: the way the newspaper is divided into departments, the specific role of each editor or staff member and the criteria used in selecting its online journalists; however, when it came to its working routine and production process, speed and constant updating were two important factors in the newsroom routine, and led to 'online news stress' in which each minute was considered as a deadline for the online newspaper.

7.5. Chapter Summary

Ethnographic observations and interviews used in this chapter supported the investigation of newsroom communication routines and production processes of three Lebanese online newspapers. It was observed that the newsroom working routines of two print newspapers and their online versions, provided collaborative relationships between the online and print versions of the same newspaper.

The findings of this chapter showed that *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* developed their own offices, journalists and unique news production over a period of a few years. Spyridou and Veglis (2008) said: 'ten years later, most media researchers and editors [had] come to realize that both content originality and the advantages provided by technology lie at the core of efficient online news production'. The data presented in this chapter found that the working routines of *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* print newspapers consisted of three processes: gathering information from events and formal resources (collection process); selecting, writing and editing the news, in addition to the designing of the pages (production process); and finally, printing and distribution of paper copies to readers (printing process). The role of the online journalists, however, was mainly to receive the selected and edited materials from the print newspaper version, convert them to computer language and finally publish them on the Internet.

Journalists working in *Annaharonline* uploaded the news from their print copy without changing them, while *Aldiyaronline* journalists edited the news and articles before publishing them online. Journalists of the born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*, on the other hand, wrote their own news which they collected from their reporters and news agencies. The working routine of the online newspapers descending from a print parent (*Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*) and those of the born-on-the-web newspaper (*Elnashra*) generally followed the same rules, news policies, deadlines and work patterns; however, the working routines in the newsrooms of online versions (*Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*) were different from their print newsroom routines (*Annahar* and *Aldiyar*) in terms of adding their own unique content and performing shorter production processes than their print editions. These findings also indicate that newsroom routines have an impact on the production process. The relationship between the print and online newsrooms of the three newspaper samples is summarised in table 7.4 below.

<u>Print Edition Production Process</u> (<i>Annahar and Aldiyar</i>)	<u>Online Edition Production Process</u> (<i>Annaharonline, Aldiyaronline</i>)	<u>Born-on-the-web Production Process</u> (<i>Elnashra</i>)
Collecting information from events and any resources by reporters and writers		
Print Editorial Staff		-
News and Stories from the print		-
current news and story selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selection and editing print content - own content production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selecting and Producing its own content
Pages Layout	Website Design	
Printing Process	Publishing on the website	
Distributor – transport, agents, membership	-	
Receivers/Readers	Receivers/Readers/Viewers	

Table 7.4: The Production Process of the Print and Online Versions

It can be concluded that online newspapers operate different production processes from their print counterparts, according to table 7.4 above; however, online versions of print newspapers (*Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaroline*) share almost the same production process with the born-on-the-web newspapers (*Elnashra*); moreover, although they encountered great changes in their design and content in 2011, Lebanese online newspapers of print parents were still reproducing most of the contents of their print counterparts, at the time of this research; another significant difference between print and online newspaper production processes was the delivery channel - whilst print newspapers distributed their editions by transport to the newsstands, news agents and subscribers, online versions disseminated their information on the Internet.

The findings in this chapter also showed that Lebanese online newspapers were changing the form of journalism practiced in the newsrooms; they also seemed to be playing a role in how those newsrooms were being staffed. The relationships between the print and online newsroom staff demonstrated that they worked closely in terms of sharing news resources - the online versions published all the news of their print counterparts in addition to their original news stories.

The production processes of print newspapers and their electronic editions are, however, dissimilar in terms of technology: online editions join the print newsroom at the beginning of their production processes by computer-linked systems; the production times of the online versions are reliant on the deadline of the print newsroom because online copies use the print content.

The ethnographic observations and interviews discussed in this chapter have provided the answers to the following research question: What are the implications of the adoption of these new technologies on work routines, production processes and employment criteria?

Finally, analysing the present situation of the Lebanese online newspapers, it is difficult to agree with the technological determinists who believe in the revolutionary power of online newspapers. The findings of this chapter revealed that the changes brought about by the Lebanese online newspapers were not sudden, uniform, or synchronic (Spyridou and Veglis, 2008). Salaverria (2005) draws a similarity between a human and a medium's life, stating that just like humans, no medium starts life as an adult, and needs to mature over time. Based on Salaverria (2005), the constant changes that the Lebanese online newspapers have witnessed lately indicate that they are still in the adolescence stage; with the adoption of new media technology in 2014, such as the interactive feature, the Lebanese online newspapers began moving in to the puberty stage.

The discussion viewed from a larger perspective includes the entire digital world, according to Grazian (2005, p. 209) who stated that most technologies have been applauded as revolutionary in history, although their shaping and impact have always been evolutionary. Bockowski (2004) finds the current position of online newspapers similar to the beginning of book printing, where most rules were based on the traditions of oral storytelling, and the technology of hand-copied manuscripts.

Newspapers have treated technological innovations the same as a trip to the dentist for many years in the same way: torture to be endured and not encouraged (Smolkin, 2006); rather than representing it as an additional burden or pain to the

financial crisis of the Lebanese newspaper industry, online newspapers actually brought renewal to the media industry by attracting younger audiences. The Lebanese online newspapers recently added more interactive features, such as the commenting on news and multimedia options, in order to attract young people who do not like to read. The use of the interactive elements, particularly the commentary on news and multimedia features regarding the three studied online newspapers, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Eight: The Use of Interactive Elements in the Three Lebanese Electronic Newspaper Case Studies

8.1. Introduction

Interactivity has become the centre of online journalism, since the advent of the Internet; it has been referred to as the main discerning characteristic of the online environment (Deuze 1999; Millison 1999), and Jonathan Steuer defined it as ‘the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time’ (Hall, 2001, p. 49).

Interactivity is one of the features that distinguishes new media from traditional mass media, because of its ability to empower the reader (Kenney et al., 2000); while the broadcast medium may be immediate and the print medium may offer depth, there is no vehicle that can perform or accomplish interactivity like the online medium (Perlman, 2002). This interactive phenomenon has caused a considerable reassessment of communication research in the academic world (Rice and Williams, 1984, p. 35; Heeter, 1989, p. 221; Rafeli and Sudweeks, 1997; Ha and James, 1998, p. 459).

Jim Hall argues in his book, *Online Journalism: A Critical Primer* (2001), that, in the age of the web, interactivity could be added to impartiality, objectivity and truth, as a core value of journalism; if interactivity is as important as these, and is a major characteristic of new media technologies, then how did the Lebanese online newspapers adapt to it?

Using the content analysis method, this chapter will discuss the research question: to what extent did the studied electronic newspapers in Lebanon use interactive elements, particularly news commentary on the news and multimedia features?

8.2. Interactivity: A ‘Buzzword’ for the Lebanese Editors-in-Chief

It is important to mention how the editors-in-chief and journalists of the three cited newspapers reacted to the term ‘interactivity’, prior to discussing the presence of interactive elements in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline*, and *Elnashra* electronic newspapers.

The researcher observed that the word ‘interactivity’ was a ‘buzzword’ to *Aldiyar’s* and *Elnashra’s* editors-in-chief, Najwa Maroun and Joseph Semaan, respectively. The jargon term ‘buzzwords’ is used within a particular area or subject matter, and appears to refer to something of extreme and popular importance, and although for a certain period it is fashionable, the term is often difficult to comprehend, since, in reality, nobody can pin down its meaning (Folayan, 2004, p. 24); according to Jensen (1998), ‘interactivity’ is such a word and is currently one of the most utilised buzzwords within the media community. Schultz (2000) commented:

interactivity has almost turned into a dull buzzword. The term is so inflated now that one begins to suspect there is much less to it than some people want to make it appear (p. 205).

The indifferent and ambivalent reaction that the researcher received, when she mentioned the use of ‘interactivity’ in *Elnashra* and *Aldiyaronline* was assumed to be due to both editors-in-chief being unfamiliar with technical terms in the English language; however, after it was clearly explained in Arabic, and its use illustrated with examples from international newspapers, their reaction remained the same; for Semaan, *Elnashra* was one of the most read electronic newspapers, and, according to him:

giving the opportunity to readers to comment and communicate with the journalists would not bring any benefit to the newspaper... [...] also, this [would be] a loss of money [...] since interactivity requires an additional staff member or journalist to monitor the comments before publishing them (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008)

The researcher went on to explain that interactivity was not only commenting on the news, but also had other important newspaper tools. Semaan abruptly ended the

discussion by stressing that ‘we have interactivity in *Elnashra*, we upload videos from time to time’ (Interview: Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008)

Semaan’s answers possibly explained why *Elnashra* born-on-the-web newspaper still lacked many major interactive features such as news commentaries, hyperlinks, archives, links to other news, emails to journalists, discussion groups, and so on.

The scenario was little different at *Aldiyaronline*, although it had the least interactive elements compared to *Annaharonline* and *Elnashra* (see table 8.2 below), Maroun confessed that the online newspaper was working on adding more interactive elements to its electronic version (2008), but apparently, she also did not clearly understand the meaning of interactivity (Interview: Najwa Maroun, Beirut, 4 November 2008). Six years later, an interview was conducted with another editor-in-chief in *Aldiyaronline*, Fady Chami, and during this period, it was evident that the news website had effected many major changes, including adding more interactive features such as video uploading, the option of readers being able to comment on the news, and more frequent updates, but Chami appeared to ignore the important role of interactivity. He said:

we are experimenting with the content of *Aldiyaronline*. We add some features, and the next day, we delete them. Our aim is to target a higher rate of audience, regardless of the importance of having additional interactive features on our electronic newspaper (Skype: Fadi Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014).

Wadih Tueni, the IT manager of *Annaharonline*, on the other hand, was more conscious of the term interactivity and its importance in the electronic media, however, it was not added to the online newspaper until the end of 2011; according to Tueni, adding a commentary feature would require hiring an additional journalist or employee to monitor the input - the same financial restrictions that Seeman gave - consequently, *Annaharonline* excluded interactivity from its electronic version at that time; in December 2011, a new layout and design was uploaded and more interactive features, such as the option to comment on the news, were offered to *Annaharonline*’s reading public.

It can be concluded from the above, therefore, that the editors did not seem to understand what the term interactivity meant; more importantly, perhaps the editors-in-chief of the three studied Lebanese online newspapers were not fully aware of the significance and financial benefits to be gained from interactivity features on their websites: for them, an online newspaper was only different from the 'traditional' newspaper because readers could access the news online, at anytime from anywhere; adopting interactive features was one of their least concerns. This was also related to the point that the birth of the three studied online newspapers came almost unplanned, unorganised and lacked a specific agenda or goal. Like *Videotex* companies, newspapers started online editions as a defensive marketing strategy (McAdams, 1995): they sought to hold on to their audiences' attention and avoid losing them to other media establishments, but, after a few years of their presence on the Internet, the Lebanese online newspapers became aware that a replica copy of the same print newspaper was no longer meeting the social and information needs of their audiences: interactive devices, for example, were added to capture and hold on to their readers' attention (McAdams, 1995). Interactive devices are also used to stimulate public discussions and draw thousands (or millions) of people together into a virtual community, according to Tucher (1997). The option of commenting on news in Lebanon, for example, was seen as a 'golden' opportunity to speak out loudly and freely, without fear of censorship; moreover, by listening to readers and involving them in news items, online journalists attempted to increase reader satisfaction, which would lead to repeated visits, therefore, interactivity in electronic newspapers is considered as a 'publicity model' (McQuail, 1994, p. 50). The concept of using interactivity as a 'publicity model' was not well understood by the editors-in-chief of *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*, resulting in a reluctance to adopt and adapt to this new concept that would improve their financial positions through more exposure and revenue, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

According to Guay (1995), interactive options on websites can be subdivided into three types or forms: navigational interactivity (for example, 'Next Page' and 'Back to Top' buttons, or scrolling up and down menu bars), functional interactivity (for

example, direct mailto: links, Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) and moderated discussion lists); and adaptive interactivity (offering chat rooms and personal customisation through ‘smart web design’); based on Guay’s (1995) classification and the data collected from this content analysis, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* had the types of interactivity shown in table 8.1. below.

	Navigational Interactivity	Functional Interactivity	Adaptive Interactivity
<i>Annaharonline</i>	A*	A	N/A**
<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	A	A	N/A
<i>Elnashra</i>	A	N/A	N/A
Total	3	2	0

Source: Content Analysis, April 2014 (*A= applicable **N/A= not applicable)

Table 8.1: Types of Interactivity in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*

The observation of the interactive options (as shown in Table 8.1) in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* online newspapers, illustrates that they had not developed interactivity beyond functional and navigational levels. Several scholars have also noted the considerable absence of interactive elements in online newspapers in their own studies (Schultz, 1999; Jankowski and Van Selm, 2000; Kenney, Gorelik and Mwangi, 2000). Guay (1995) argued that the most sophisticated level of interactivity is adaptive, meaning that it allows websites to adapt or adjust (ideally in real-time) to the behaviour of their readers.

Bucy (2004) states that there are two distinct kinds of interactivity: user-to-system and user-to-user; similarly, Chung (2008) divides interactivity into human and medium. Fora, chat rooms and viewers’ comments on the news are examples of human (user-to-user interactivity); whereas using the navigation tools, customisation, hypertext and multimedia are examples of medium (user-to-system interactivity). Chung points out that these different types of interactivity attract distinctive kinds of audiences; therefore having multiple interactive elements is the obvious approach for newspapers.

Table 8.2 summarises the online features that exist in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*. The categorisation of interactivity used in the table is based on the typologies suggested by Li (1998), Boczkowski (2004) and Jankowski and Selm (2000).

	<i>Annaharonline</i>	<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	<i>Elnashara</i>	Total
Graphics added to story	**N/A	N/A	N/A	0
E-mail link to editorial board or author	*A	N/A	N/A	1
Link added relevant to the story	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Discussion forum on the subject of the article	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Comments on the article	A	A	N/A	2
Links that allow the user to navigate within the article	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Links which allow the user to navigate within the web site	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Links to other sites	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Animation	A	N/A	A	2
Music	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Sounds	A	N/A	A	2
Video sequences	A	A	A	3
Photo album	**N/A	N/A	*A	1
Computer/Net research (list of links)	N/A	A	N/A	1
Search on the website	A	A	A	3
Archive	A	A	N/A	2
Entertainment (games, comics)	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Statistics/Voting	A	A	A	3
Events database	N/A	N/A	A	1
SMS to mobile device	N/A	N/A	A	1

Other local information (weather, currency)	N/A	N/A	A	1
Travel offers	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Special offers for young people	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Subscription	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Facilities to place advertisements	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Frequent updates	A	A	A	3
Total	9	7	10	26

Source: typologies suggested by Li (1998), Boczkowski (2004) and Jankowski and Selin (2000) (*A= applicable **N/A= not applicable)

Table 8.2: The Online Features in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*

Table 8.2 displays the provision of interactive elements on the home pages of *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* ('A' was used to indicate the availability of the interactive element on each electronic newspaper sample). Twenty-six interactive elements were analysed in this thesis, in order to explore the interactivity offered by the three Lebanese online newspaper samples.

The study of the website contents revealed that the born-on-the-web newspaper *Elnashra*, offered the most interactive elements (10), followed by *Annaharonline* with 9, and *Aldiyaronline* 7. This investigation also found that the common interactive elements offered by all three online newspapers were the 'search' feature, frequent updates and statistics/voting; the rest of the features such as weather, currency, video, sound, and comments on the articles were also offered by one or more of the online newspaper samples, but many of them, such as infographics added to stories, additional links, discussion, links to other sites, entertainment, travel and special offers, subscription and advertising facilities were excluded from *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*. Other different features were used by some online newspapers such as email link to editorial, animation, photo album, computer/net, research archive, events database and SMS to mobile device. Schultz (2000) believes that most online newspapers are not achieving their potential in terms of the interactive options they offer, and still have to improve these choices by developing real audience participation.

In summary, the three Lebanese newspapers that have been studied were using very limited interactive features, thus neglecting the major role of this tool in online newspapers. New media consumption research by Shyam Sundar (2000) revealed that the more interactive opportunities websites present to users, the more involved the users will become. It seems that Lebanese editors-in-chief were afraid that engaging their readers in their online newspapers would provide a substantial challenge to the existing confessional system; for example, some political comments could potentially affect the delicate balance between media outlets and political pluralism, therefore, newspapers in Lebanon did not (and perhaps still do not) want their users to be directly involved in their news items, in order to maintain the political and social status quo (further discussed below).

8.3. Commenting on News and Use of Multimedia Features

This research investigates the ‘commenting on news’ feature as both human (user-to-user) interactivity, and the use of multimedia as a medium (user-to-system) in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

8.3.1. The Feature of Commenting on News

Newspapers and magazines first started interactive features by allowing readers to comment in the form of letters to the editor (Chung, 2008, p. 259), but, with the advent of electronic versions, interactivity took on another dimension: it not only facilitated the interaction between the journalist and the reader, but also amongst readers; if interactive features of online newspapers encourage a two-way (or multi-directional) flow of communication amongst a community of users, then the ritual model of communication seems more appropriate than the traditional transmission model, as it is linked to such terms as sharing, participation, association, fellowship and the possession of a common faith (Carey, 1975); with the interactive features of new media, the receiver (reader) is recognised as an active participant - readers can seek, select and further comment on information, in addition to that ‘received’ from journalists.

The possibility of being able to comment on the news, opened the door to a rapid feedback option between ‘equal communication partners’, as Kenney et al. (2000) described it, therefore, the concept of a mass audience becomes archaic: new media journalists cannot target a ‘mass audience’. McQuail (1994) defines mass audience as ‘a large aggregate of undifferentiated yet heterogeneous and anonymous people who are widely dispersed and not interactive’ (pp. 35-35); this opportunity offered by online newspapers allowed readers to be directly linked to each other, thus creating discrete and fragmented audiences who share much in common; furthermore, the story ends as soon as it is published or broadcast on traditional mass media, whereas readers’ comments allow people to become engaged in on-going virtual conversations, as a starting point for generating continued interactivity with their public contributions.

Annaharonline allowed public involvement with their news stories in 2011; a year later, *Aldiyaronline* added this feature to its website. The comments written on the two websites, <http://www.annahar.com/> and <http://www.charlesayoub.com/home> (*Aldiyaronline*) were observed for a one-month period (21 March to 22 April 2014); however, before revealing the outcome of this study, it is important to mention here that, until the date of this research (April 2014), the born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra* still had not introduced this feature; according to its editor-in-chief, Joseph Semaan, this omission was related to financial problems (Skype: Joseph Semaan and researcher, Beirut and Canada, April 2014); as previously mentioned, however, it also seemed that *Elnashra* was not aware of the importance of having interactive features on its website, consequently, *Elnashra* was excluded from the study in this section.

8.3.1.1. Comments in *Aldiyaronline*

The option of contributing to the news commentaries in, *Aldiyaronline*, required the participant to provide his or her name (or a screen name or ‘handle’), his or her email address and a ‘security code’ (password). These three options were mandatory before being able to post any comments. Arthur Santana, an assistant professor at the University of Houston, studied the tone of thousands of online

comments posted on sites that allowed either anonymous users or ‘real’ commentators. His study, published in 2014 and entitled: *Virtuous or Vitriolic: The Effect of Anonymity on Civility in Online Newspaper Reader Comment Boards*⁹⁹, concluded that news websites which required commentators to use their real names led to more civil comments; nearly 44% of ‘real’ commentators posted civil comments, compared to 15% of anonymous participants: ‘in short, when anonymity was removed, civility prevailed’, Santana explained. Santana (2014) also found in his study that fewer newspaper websites permitted anonymous commentators. He pointed out:

One of the benefits of online anonymity is that it allows people to express their views, uninhibited, especially if it is an unpopular opinion; [...] it’s when commenting descends into hateful language, threats or racism that the conversation breaks down and any benefits of constructive dialogue go away.

A Pew Study, on the other hand, conducted by Rainie et al., (2013) regarding *Anonymity, Privacy and Security Online*¹⁰⁰ found that a quarter of all Internet users had posted anonymous comments; however, when it came to posting any material online, the study showed that people

are more likely than not to attach their name or a recognizable screen name to their material. The study also revealed that 49% of Internet users say they have used their real name, and 47% use a screen name or username that people associate with them.

Fady Chami explained that the commentary option in *Aldiyaronline* was opened to the public - unmonitored or filtered by any staff member or journalist; in his opinion, if people wanted to write, using a vulgar, offensive or impolite style, they were free to do so, without censorship; according to Chami, anyone could write anything using a screen name and a fake picture to protect his or her identity, therefore, ‘what’s the aim of monitoring the reader’s comments? (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014).

Observations revealed that although commenting on news in *Aldiyaronline* was unmonitored and did not require the use of a real name or picture by the

⁹⁹<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17512786.2013.813194#.VGHobXlyZlY> [retrieved 11 November 2014]

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/09/05/anonymity-privacy-and-security-online/> [retrieved 11 November 2014]

commentator, the website contained few comments. *Aldiyaronline* was accessed by the researcher on a daily basis, over a period of one month, as previously stated, in order to investigate the comments written on the main page: during that period, only one report had a single comment; according to Alexa statistics¹⁰¹, although the visitors of *Aldiyaronline* may range between 70,000 to 100,000 visitors per day, depending on the importance of the events taking place, not a single comment was posted (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014). It is also worth mentioning that the report which had a solitary comment was visited 958 times, according to *Aldiyaronline* website statistics. (Figure 8.1 shows a copy of the story published in *Aldiyaronline* with a single comment).



¹⁰¹ <http://www.alexa.com/> [retrieved 11 November 2014]
200



Source: <http://www.charlesayoub.com/more/701309> [retrieved 9 April 2014]

Figure 8.1: Copy of a story in *Aldiyaronline* with a single comment

Questions regarding the reasons behind the virtual absence of comments on *Aldiyaronline* website, were explained away by Chami as ‘what concerns us more is the number of readers’ (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 March 2014). Raja Mihtar, a journalist in the online department, refuted the fact that, over a thirty-day period there was only one comment in *Aldiyaronline*. He assured the researcher that each day they received hundreds of comments, and they were all posted on the website (Skype: Raja Mihtar and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014).; another online journalist in the department, Mohammad El-Hani, pointed out that they received comments from their readers on a daily basis, to the extent that the online newspaper staff were unable to reply to every comment. Their only explanation to the obvious evidence that their website did not have any comments was that the researcher had not seen the written comments. El-Hani added: ‘or maybe we did not receive many comments as we usually do, during the period [when] your study [was being] conducted’ (Skype: Mohammad El-Hani and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014)

The data was collected between March and April 2014, as previously stated, but observations of *Aldiyaronline*’s news continued to be made, after that period; at no time were there more than two comments posted on the website’s news section. This prolonged examination of the website suggests that the self-reported traffic published on *Aldiyaronline* is high or inflated, especially when it is compared to

the number of visitors who comment on the stories. The explanation may lie in the following: (i) either the number of website visitors was being exaggerated for political and (or) commercial reasons, such as attracting more advertisements; or (ii) *Aldiyaronline* readers were not interested in commenting on the news; according to Jakob Nielson (2006) in his article: *Participation Inequality: Encouraging More Users to Contribute*¹⁰²:

all large-scale, multi-user communities and online social networks that rely on users to contribute content or build services, share one property: most users don't participate very much. Often, they simply lurk in the background.

The current option of commenting on news, due to advanced technology has developed in most international online newspapers; however, online newspaper readers appear to be hesitant to use it.

Only a very small percentage of readers usually will comment on any given news story or blog posting, and most comments will be made by a relative handful of frequent posters who may not be representative of general readership (Grabowicz, 2014).

User participation often more or less follows a 90-9-1 rule, according to Nielson (2006): 90% of users are lurkers (read or observe, but do not contribute), 9% of users contribute from time to time, but other priorities dominate their time, and 1% of users participates a great deal, and accounts for most contributions. It can be concluded, therefore, that the readers of *Aldiyaronline* are lurkers because they are more readers than they are contributors.

8.3.1.2. Comments in *Annaharonline*

Santana's (2014) study also found that some sites had begun requesting users to sign in with *Facebook* accounts bearing their names, in order to comment on the news, which is the case in *Annaharonline*; as Wadih Tueni explained, *Annaharonline* was linked to that social network, and commentators could participate on *Annaharonline* with their name and picture, as displayed on *Facebook*, which would automatically appear on the news website; an added option allowed commentators to post the same comment on *Facebook* by ticking

¹⁰² <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/participation-inequality/> [retrieved 11 November 2014]

the 'also post on Facebook' box - their comment would appear on the newspaper website as well as on the Facebook page of *Annahar* (<https://www.facebook.com/Annaharlb>). See figure 8.2 below.



Source: <http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/112933> [retrieved 23 April 2014]

Figure 8.2: Copy of an article in *Annaharonline* with the comments

Using the content analysis method to investigate the comments on news published in *Annaharonline* for a period of one month (21 March to 22 April 2014), this research found that most of the news and articles on the website did not have any comments. *Annaharonline* in Lebanon was accessed from Canada (where the

researcher resides) at various time of the day to check if any comments had been added to the same news item, but there was little change. The articles or news that had the highest rates of comments were those which included the words such as 'sex', 'rape', 'nudity', 'homosexuality', and so on. An article published on 3 March, for example, entitled 'Terrorism, Sex, and Kim's Ass' had 31 comments (<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/112933>); conversely, comments on articles that dealt with the election of the Lebanese president, for instance, did not exceed one or two comments (<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/128228>); however, stories relating to famous Lebanese, Arab or international singers and actresses had a high number of comments: the article about the famous Lebanese singer, Haifa Wehbe, published on 22 April had 12 comments (<http://www.annahar.com/article/127314>).

Joumana Haddad, an *Annahar* newspaper journalist, said that the word 'sexy' was the most searched word in Iraq, in 2013 (<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/112933>); moreover, Egypt occupied the fourth place, internationally, among countries whose searches involved the two words 'sex' and 'fuck'. This phenomenon arguably explains why the Arabs in general, and the Lebanese in particular, are still searching for uncensored media to 'quench their thirst' for 'taboo' topics and to freely express their feelings and opinions; consequently, commenting on news features in an online newspaper is the platform on which to say or write what other traditional mass media, such as television and radio, would censor.

This research also found that the majority of the comments were written in Arabic or in *Karshouni*: a form of writing that uses Latin script to write Arabic words; for example, the word جريدة (newspaper in Arabic) is written as 'Jarida'; moreover, most of the comments were short and did not exceed two or three sentences; they were mainly written by commentators living in the Middle East, such as Egypt and Syria, and the Lebanese living in Europe, the USA or Canada; finally, during the ethnographic observations, it was noted that none of the published comments received a reply or clarification from the newspaper, the writer or the journalist.

In summary, although *Annaharonline* was attempting to add more interactive features to its website, it still omitted meaningful interactivity, as stated at the beginning of this chapter. The majority of the comments published on its news website were confrontational or offensive and included swear words and vulgar terms, attacks on the newspaper or the journalist or writer for their personal styles, beliefs and opinions, included racist expressions and words berating certain countries, nationalities, sexual orientations, and so on; on the other hand, the minority of the comments published were reasonable, informed, well-argued points that illuminated the issue and brought fresh perspectives to the debate.

In conclusion, Lebanese editors-in-chief, such as Wadih Tueni in *Annaharonline*, argued that comments were the modern-day equivalent of the letter to the editor (Skype: Wadih Tueni and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 16 May 2014); others, such as Joseph Semaan in *Elnashra*, believed that newspapers had more important concerns than worrying about comments, and, for this reason, they did not add the commenting features to their electronic copies (Skype: Joseph Semaan and researcher, Beirut and Canada, April 2014). Removing comments, however, also affects the reading experience itself: it may take away the motivation to engage with a topic more deeply, and to share it with a wider group of readers; on the other hand, one survey found that 63% of readers said they were not more likely to visit a news site because it allowed posting of comments, although young adults were much more inclined to visit sites with the comment feature (Grabowicz, 2014). It is also clear that monitoring the comments, as in the case of *Annaharonline*, did not put an end to the vulgar, racist, hateful phrases which some commentators deplored; even adding the commentator's, name and address to the two online newspapers, *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline*, did not decrease the percentage of disrespectful language used in the comments; in his study, Santana (2014) concluded that 53% of anonymous comments included language that was vulgar, racist, profane or hateful; by comparison, only about 29% of comments on sites that require commentators to use their names were deemed uncivil.

Diana Sakaini, a journalist in *Annaharonline*, revealed that *Annaharonline* was creating a 'social media team' which would consist of a group of journalists whose

sole role was to monitor every word that was written on *Annaharonline* and its page on *Facebook*. This team would have the right to delete, edit and reply to the comments written on both news sites. *Annaharonline* was hoping that this new strategy would finally put an end to the disgraceful language used by the commentators (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 19 May 2014)

The study also revealed that the topic of a story correspondingly affected the tone of the comments. Stories involving race and sexual terminologies in their title or content led to significantly more comments; for example, an article by Ibrahim El-Zaydi published in *Annaharonline* on 15 March 2014, entitled *Syrian Sex and Lebanese Viagra* was ranked first among the most read articles, over a period of almost three weeks, and included more than 35 comments (<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/116458>); another article written by comedian, Andrew Jadah, entitled *A Controversial Rape* published on 25 April 2014, was ranked second among the most read articles, with 24 comments (<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/128138->).

The psychologists, Marco Yzer and Brian Southwell (2008), said:

new communication technologies do not fundamentally alter the theoretical bounds of human interaction; such interaction continues to be governed by basic human tendencies.

8.3.2 The Use of Multimedia

There is a general belief that the Internet has erased the boundaries between print, television, radio and online technologies: the ‘new’ digital media, such as electronic newspapers, can now contain ‘old’ media forms such as text, pictures, videos, sound, and so on; the web is often described as the artefact that makes this homogenisation of different media possible; as a consequence, online news can combine all kinds of modalities into a new digital multimedia format, and in doing so, the ‘reader’ of an online newspaper becomes a ‘news consumer’ by being able to read, see or listen to the news through one medium; therefore, with the interactive feature of multimedia, the term ‘reader’ is no longer the right term used for the audience of an electronic newspaper.

The concept of multimedia is used both as the combination of media as well as a mix of modalities. Deuze (2001, 2003) defines multimedia as the amalgamation of multiple media formats and the coordinated delivery of content through different distribution channels; Dahlgren considers multimedia as ‘the extent to which text, graphics, sound, video, and (still and moving) images are translated and integrated into a common digital form (1996, p. 64), and MacGregor (2003) simply defines it as ‘multiple modalities’. Michaël Opgenhaffen (2009, p.84) however, clarified that multimedia and multimodality are two different things, in his Ph.D. research entitled *Multimedia, interactivity and hypertexts in online news: Effect on News Processing and Objective and Subjective Knowledge*. He said that multimedia refers to the distribution of news through different online media, while multimodality refers to the design and the combined use of semiotic modes to cover the story.

Some scholars (Hoogeveen, 1997 and Zerba, 2004) believe that the term multimedia is used only when two different media or units combine or integrate: MacGregor (2003) uses the concept of trimedia to emphasise the combination of video, audio and text. Deuze (2004, p. 140) identified two types of multimedia: convergent and divergent; according to Deuze, the former is the use of ‘two or more media formats, such as the spoken and written word, music, moving and still images, graphic animations, including interactive and hyper-textual elements’, whilst the latter as the integrated use of multiple media such as a website, a user-net newsgroup, e-mail, SMS, radio, television, and so forth. The table 8.3 below shows the types of multimedia in the three studied Lebanese online newspapers, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*.

	Convergent Multimedia	Divergent Multimedia	Total
<i>Annaharonline</i>	*A	A	2
<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	A	**N/A	1
<i>Elnashra</i>	A	A	2
Total	3	2	5

*A= applicable **N/A= not applicable

Table 8.3: Types of Multimedia in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*

Table 8.3 above shows that *Annaharonline* and *Elnashra* included both convergent and divergent multimedia in their newspapers; in addition to the text, videos, animation, still and slide images, *Annaharonline* added WebTV, and *Elnashra* incorporated the SMS feature; moreover, with its updated design, *Aldiyaronline* uploaded new multimedia options to its block texts such as videos and pictures (discussed later in this chapter). Deuze (2004) argues that convergence in the online production process does not always lead to one news format: it often results in the integrated presentation of a news item through different media, such as a website, news blog, news alert, RSS feed or SMS; hence, convergence on the work floor does not, in any case, lead to a fully convergent media message, and certainly not to a situation in which all online news looks the same. Thurlow et al. (2004) describe the convergent of mass media as ‘technologies within technologies’ with specific types of communication and logics of their own. It can be argued that the definition of multimedia is still indistinct and complicated. Opgenhaffen (2009, p. 66) concluded in his study that ‘the lack of an unambiguous definition of multimedia makes it abundantly clear that there is a great need for redefining the concept’; however, regardless of which definition of multimedia is adopted, there seems to be considerable controversy surrounding the effectiveness of its use.

The ethnographic observations and interviews conducted for this thesis revealed that in the three Lebanese newspapers, it was evident that *Aldiyaronline*, *Annaharonline* and *Elnashra* had adopted the multimedia features without any previous research or study on the way their audiences may adapt to this new technology. Martijin Hoogeveen (1997, p. 151) pointed out that designers of

websites seemed to be operating under the assumption or ‘dominant conviction’ that multimedia was desired by users and conducive to better communication. He criticised that concept of ‘strong paradigmatic belief in the benevolent effects of multimedia’ and questioned whether adding multimedia functionality to information systems would necessarily lead to improved transfer of information from sender (s) to receiver (r).

The ‘dual-coding theory’ propounded by Paivio in 1986 (even before the advent of electronic newspapers), demonstrates that the combination of visual and verbal information stimulates news users to store information in two ways: verbally and visually. The redundancy theory suggests that the more the same information is encoded and stored, the better it will be remembered (Mayer, 2003); as a result, the news with multimedia is doubly-encoded and doubly-learned, resulting in a better recall of the information.

Annie Lang (1995) concluded in her study, however, that forty years of research on audio and video had yielded strikingly contradictory results; while half of the research showed that redundancy in using multimedia enhances memory, the other half showed that it hurts memory; for example, a study conducted by DeFleur et al. (1992, pp. 1010-1022) compared different modalities in *Newspaper, Computer, Television and Radio*, and lends credence to the notion that adding extra modalities to text degrades memory for content; some of the explanations offered for this effect include interference, distraction, overstimulation, cognitive overload and fatigue. Another research conducted by Gale (1990) showed that adding multimedia leads to positive attitudes such as greater confidence, motivation and enthusiasm among users (pp. 175-189); according to Biocca (1997), the senses are ‘channels to the mind’, and, since multimedia appeals to a variety of senses, it might generate more immersion with the interface.

The study of the effect of multimedia on its users would be an interesting topic, but it is beyond the scope of this paper - this research investigates the adoption of, and adaptation to, multimedia features in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*; The five multimedia features examined in this research are based on Dahlgren’s

definition of multimedia, presented above, and are: text, graphics, sound, video, and (static and moving) images (1996, p. 64). The table 8.4 below shows the availability of these features in the studied Lebanese newspapers.

Multimedia features	Annaharonline	Aldiyaronline	Elnashra	
Text	*A	A	A	3
Graphics	**N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Sound	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Video	A	A	A	3
Static and moving images	A	A	A	3
Total	3	3	3	9

*A= applicable

**N/A= not applicable

Table 8.4: Five Multimedia features in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*

The three electronic newspapers lack the multimedia features of graphics and sound, as seen in the table 8.4 above, therefore, they were excluded from the analysis in this chapter. A Ph.D. dissertation by Yasmin Gopal (1996) showed that the addition of sound to a website resulted in lower retention of the content of the webpage than a control site without sound. Another laboratory experiment (Berry, 1999) compared a text-only news website with a multimedia version of the same site, which failed to show any difference in audience recall. Most of the studies on modality differences (DeFleur et al., 1992) have repeatedly shown that auditory and audio-visual presentations are cognitively inferior to textual ones. Sundar's (2000) research on *Multimedia effects on processing and perception of online news: A study of picture, audio, and video downloads*, concluded that people learn comparatively less about news content from audio-visual media than from print communications.

This content analysis uncovered the absence of the features of graphics and sound in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* had inadvertently occurred. Raja Mihtar, a journalist in *Aldiyaronline*, stated that most of the multimedia used on its

website was taken from *Youtube*, and since *Youtube* is a video-sharing website, *Aldiyaronline* lacked any audio or graphics (Skype: Raja Mihtar and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014); furthermore, according to Wadih Tueni, the IT manager of *Annaharonline*, said that not all stories require an audio: he added: ‘videos are more attractive to watch than audio’ (Skype: Wadih Tueni and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 16 May 2014). Hussein Assy, the assistant editor in *Elnashra*, confirmed that they used to have short audio clips, written and broadcast by the well-known Lebanese comic, Charbel Khalil, which criticised certain social and political topics; however, these clips ceased when Khalil’s contract with *Elnashra* was not renewed (Interview: Hussein Assy, Beirut, 8 September 2008).

The convergence of text, static and moving photographs, and video, forms a ‘multimedia story’; according to Stevens (2013):

a multimedia story is some combination of text, still photographs, video clips, audio, graphics and interactivity presented on a website in a nonlinear format in which the information in each medium is complementary, not redundant.

The presence of pictures (static and motion), and video in multimedia stories published in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* will be discussed in this chapter; however, before investigating the multimedia features in the three newspapers being studied, it is important to mention here that, unlike the news commentary feature, the presence of multimedia was evident; while the researcher had to access every news story uploaded on the main page of *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* to verify whether any comments had been written, the title on the main page of the uploaded news revealed whether the item included a video or set of pictures (in the newspapers that had multimedia features).

8.3.2.1. The Use of Pictures (static and motion)

There is no doubt that the Internet has vastly enhanced the ability to display, upload and share pictures as well as videos; with the advent of online newspapers and social media sites, people can now consider themselves not just as viewers and consumers of images, but creators and users of them. An online newspaper that does not use images remains in the print culture and oblivious to the advantages of the new medium. In general, pictures are used in a newspaper to make the page

more attractive to viewers, to report the news and to illustrate the story (Ingram and Henshall, 2008). Some scholars (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 17) say that images work via a second communicative system: one fully as expressive as natural language, but separate and independently structured; others (Langer, 1957) find that visual and verbal meanings are more dissimilar than similar, with the visual lacking a kind of determinacy for which verbal language seems better suited; in principle, visual meanings may be entirely separate from verbal ones (Dillon, 1999), but as a practical matter, the reader of a newspaper (print or online version) rarely finds pure images with no text attached to them; in *The Rhetoric of the Image* (1977), Roland Barthes wrote:

Today, at the level of mass communications, it appears that the linguistic message is indeed present in every image: as title, caption, accompanying press article, film dialogue, comic strip balloon which shows that it is not very accurate to talk of a civilization of the image. We are still, and more than ever, a civilization of writing; writing and speech continuing to be the full terms of the informational structure (p. 38).

A picture is a medium of recording reality that is iconic as well as indexical, according to Paul Carter (2000) - a photograph is a representation of a particular moment and situation in time. John Berger (1972) defines images as:

a sight which has been recreated or reproduced. It is an appearance, or a set of appearances, which has been detached from the place and time in which it first made its appearance and preserved - for a few moments or a few centuries (pp. 9-10).

Barthes believes that a newspaper photograph has many meanings. He says:

an object that has been worked on, chosen, composed, constructed, treated according to professional, aesthetic or ideological norms which are so many factors of connotation (cited in Bignell, 1977, p. 98);

Another quality of a news picture is that it must be relevant to the context and add value to the story; however, pictures can sometimes tell the news by themselves. A news photograph should answer five important questions: who, where, why, when, what and how, in order to enhance or complement a story, and leave the reader knowing more than he or she would have, if the photographs had not been present.

Saussure (1972) suggests in his book, *A Course in General Linguistics*, that signs are made up of two parts: a signifier (sound, object, image, and so on) and a signified (concept). The relation that exists between the signifier and the signified

is arbitrary, based on convention, or unmotivated; consequently, codes are invented and used to help in the understanding of their significance.

The majority of the photographs published in newspapers can be discussed in terms of the paradigms of setting, shot size, camera angle, composition, focus, lighting and the use of lenses and film stock; all these signifiers connote meaning that can be related to each other and to the text as a whole, producing a combination of signs or a syntagm (Carter, 2000). Barthes (1977) suggested that pictures have many characteristics, both negative and positive:

All images are polysemous; they imply, underlying their signifiers, a “floating chain” of signifieds, [and] the reader is able to choose some and ignore others. Polysemy poses a question of meaning and this question always comes through as a dysfunction [...] hence, in every society various techniques are developed intended to fix the floating chain of signifieds in such a way as to counter the terror of uncertain signs; the linguistic message is one of those techniques (pp. 38-39).

The combination of images with words helps to specify and stabilise the interpretations of particular pictures; for Barthes, photographs ‘say’ nothing, they are mute and they make no propositions about the world. Victor Burgin (1982, pp. 1-15) writes in the introduction of the book, *Thinking Photography*, that images, like texts, have a rhetoric of arrangements which signify, but there is no syntax that articulates their parts and binds them into a whole; according to Berger:

no other kind of relic or text from the past can offer such a direct testimony about the world which surrounded other people at other times. In this respect images are more precise and richer than literature (1972, p. 10).

The content analysis of *Elnashra*, *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* showed that most of the news published on the front page of their websites were accompanied by a picture or set of pictures; some stories about health and the economy were illustrated with photographs, although some of them appeared to have no informational value; for example, a story published in *Annaharonline* about the international prices of gold contained a still picture of gold bars that lacks any figures or charts that adds informational value to the story; furthermore, articles written by *Annahar*’s journalists were accompanied by the picture of the writer. Wadih Tueni stated:

not all stories are ideal for still or moving pictures. Some will be told more easily in words than in pictures, while other stories may be told with one picture more easily and clearly than in many words. (Interview: Wadih Tuani, Beirut, 7 October 2008)

However, according to Reine Bou Moussa, a journalist in *Annaharonline*, pictures are important in an online newspaper: they add value and meaning to the story; while the print newspaper has limited space for pictures, the electronic version can upload a whole album of pictures to one single news story. She added: 'this is one of the benefits of an online newspaper that differentiates it from a print media [version]' (Skype: Reine Bou Moussa and researcher: Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014). Raja Mihtar, a journalist in *Aldiyaronline*, insisted that all news published in *Aldiyaronline* must be accompanied by a photograph. He went on to say that the phrase 'with pictures' is often included with some titles of news items, in order to stress the importance of having these pictures uploaded with the story (Skype: Raja Mihtar and researcher: Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014).

The findings revealed that *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* used pictures in most of their news stories, the born-on-the-web newspaper, *Elnashra*, uploaded very few pictures to its news website - the political pages of *Elnashra* lacked any photographs, but social and art news had many images. Ziad Saadeh, a member of the editorial team explained that the online journalist focused mainly on the content of the news:

its [the newspaper's] role is to update our readers with the latest news taking place around them. Readers of the art pages are thirsty for more pictures and videos that describe the news and give it more credibility (Interview: Ziad Saadeh, Beirut, 9 September 2008)

Similar to *Aldiyaronline*, *Elnashra* created 'a picture gallery' or 'album', which contained the news archives with the latest pictures uploaded - *Elnashra* had 1,500 photograph albums on its webpage, none of which contained any text; the collection dealt with certain topics, mostly social news; in the case where more than a picture was added to the story, *Annaharonline* uploaded them in a slide-motion format. *Elnashra* and *Aldiyaronline* placed the pictures, one below the other, on the same page: the reader (viewer) would have to scroll down to see all the pictures.

Content creators believe that a journalist should think flexibly about images, while remaining faithful to the news organisation's online style; consequently, pictures uploaded on the news website may not always be located in the same place and in the same size. A striking image could be more dramatic if used across the top of the page, while some vertical images would look better if used down the right-hand side of the text (Winder, 2009). The size of the photograph and the position it takes on the front page, is an important code for the reader, as it affects the attention given to the paper; in print newspapers, the front page is often seen as the major selling point - it is what attracts the potential reader to buy the paper and to read further. The size and position is also an important signifier of the importance of the story and the image itself; however, in an online newspaper, the home page resembles the front page of a print newspaper, and the pictures used must be designed and uploaded in a manner that draws the reader's attention to the news stories¹⁰³.

Choosing a certain picture over another is usually based on certain qualities or factors, and many decisions are taken by the photographer as well as the journalist: focus, lighting, angle, frame, colour, news worthiness, and so on¹⁰⁴; these produce various representations and readings of the same captured moment, thus creating different connotations; in online newspapers, for example, the kind and quality of the image is not particularly important, as long as what it depicts refers to the lead of the story; in the three Lebanese newspapers, the online journalists chose and uploaded their pictures to the stories they had written. Bou Moussa stated that every journalist working in *Annaharonline* had to take training sessions offered by 'Annahar Training and Research Center' (Skype: Reine Bou Moussa and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 may 2014) which covered how to use multimedia in an online newspaper. The majority of pictures uploaded in *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* were taken from news agencies, or by

¹⁰³<http://www.theguardian.com/media-network/media-network-blog/2012/mar/19/attention-span-internet-consumer> [retrieved 8 November 2014]

¹⁰⁴ 'What is a journalist', 2008, The News Manual, Chapter two, available at: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%201/volume1_02.htm [retrieved 11 November 2014]

photographers working in *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* print newspapers; on the other hand, *Elnashra* born-on-the-web newspaper had two photographers (Hussein Baydoun and Karim Baydoun, the cameraman), who worked exclusively for the website. The photographer, who usually accompanies a journalist, is in charge of capturing what happens in events and press conferences¹⁰⁵; however, it was observed that the role of journalists working in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*, was to select rather than create pictures.

There is no doubt that pictures are important and have an impact on how much time people spend reading the news. Visual aids such as still pictures, motion pictures, slides, videos and sound, are more arresting than language. Zerba (2004) suggests: 'some users prefer to hear a story or watch a story instead of reading heavy text, features that take into account different learning styles, the original purpose of multimedia' (p. 12).

The findings from the content analysis disclosed that pictures were used differently in the three studied newspapers; according to the online journalists working in *Annaharonline*, pictures may add value to the news, but sometimes, a small piece of text can be more effective than many pictures (Interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008); since online newspapers have no space limitations, online journalists have the choice of selecting more than one picture and uploading them to the news page in a slideshow format. Online newspapers are also able to create photograph albums on their websites, which is not possible for print newspapers whose news and pictures are constrained by space limitations.

Aldiyaronline's policy in selecting news was different from that of *Annaharonline*. Online journalists working in *Aldiyaronline* believed that news must be accompanied by a picture, or set of pictures, whether or not they add significant information to the news; for them, an online newspaper must be rich in pictures which will differentiate it from a print copy; consequently, in line with this

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.theguardian.com/media-network/media-network-blog/2012/mar/19/attention-span-internet-consumer> [retrieved 8 November 2014]

concept, their website was loaded with pictures; since both newspapers descended from a print counterpart, journalists working in *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* depended on the photographers of the print version, as well as images found on the Internet, therefore, their role was to select news rather than create it.

Elnashra, on the other hand, believed that pictures added value and credibility to social and art news, but also stated that pictures uploaded with political news were time-consuming, especially as their aim was to ‘race with the news’.

The size, location and quality of pictures uploaded on online newspapers are important factors in choosing a picture - it draws the reader’s attention to the uploaded news. *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* online journalists depended on their tuition and experience of their photographers in selecting their pictures, while *Annaharonline* provided assessment courses, however, the content analysis in this research showed that pictures in all three studied newspapers *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* were uploaded to the same position, without taking into consideration the importance of the location and size of the picture.

8.3.2.2. The Use of Videos

Videos have generally been around on the Internet for almost nine years¹⁰⁶. Even though there are several video services on the World Wide Web, the trend of uploading and viewing a video was popularised with the appearance of *YouTube* in 2005¹⁰⁷ - *YouTube* is the number two search engine in the world, after *Google* (Rosensteel, 2013). Nielsen’s *Global Survey of Multi-Screen Media Usage* (2012) of more than 28,000 Internet respondents in 56 countries, showed that 84% watched video content at home on a computer or on TV (83%), at least once a month; by contrast, in 2010, more online consumers reported watching video content on TV (90%) than on a computer (86%) in a month-long period (Nielsen,

¹⁰⁶ Hopkins, J. 11 October 2006. ‘Surprise! There’s a Third Youtube co-founder’, *USA Today*, available at: http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-10-11-youtube-karim_x.htm [retrieved 11 November 2014]

¹⁰⁷ Cloud, J. 16 December 2006. ‘The Gurus of Youtube’, *Time Magazine*, available at: <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1570795,00.html> [retrieved 11 September 2014]

2012); moreover, the data from the *B2B Demand Generation Benchmark Survey* for 2012 showed that most respondents preferred video over white papers (grey literature) (Verrill, 2013).

This indicates that watching video content on computers has become just as popular as watching video content on television. It can also be concluded that currently, online consumers have a limited attention span, and watching a short news video is often preferable to reading a long news article (O’Neil, 2011).

Douglas Simon of the *D S Simon Web Influencers Survey*¹⁰⁸ garnered results based on an online survey delivered to over 1,000 media influencers in the fields of TV, radio, newspaper, magazine and web media properties, and showed that ‘online media has now officially become a video programming network’. The survey which was conducted in 2011, concluded that 33% more media outlets are using online video to cover news, than they were a year ago, and the growth of online video is showing no signs of stopping (O’Neill, 2011).

Why has the online news video ‘market’ grown so fast? According to Susan Weinschenk, a Ph.D. holder and a leading speaker, author and consultant (quoted in Rosensteel, 2013), online consumers are drawn more to videos than text because the human brain uses the faces as a gathering point for information and believability, more than words; similar to faces, the simple sound of a human voice speaking has an amazing way of converting information into meaningful content – the significance of which is that emotions are contagious; the body language of emotions is appealing, and humans naturally love to share them. Finally, in addition to emotions, people have the tendency to recognise moving things more than static objects, traced back to the ‘stone age’ in which people’s ancestors survived by noticing things in motion (Rosensteel, 2013).

Dreier (2011) recognised five reasons for uploading videos to an online story: news videos create a connection with the person telling the story, convey excitement that does not come through in text, can include great visuals and

¹⁰⁸ <http://media.dssimon.com/2014webinfluencerssurvey> [retrieved 11 November 2014]

characters, give a good experience, and finally, watching a video can be faster than reading a story. Dreier (2011) agreed with Weinschenk (quoted in Rosensteel, 2013) that the human faces and voices displayed in a video, create a certain connection between the person telling the story and the viewer – a bond that forms a ‘good’ experience much faster than reading a text in a newspaper.

Fady Chami believed that using videos that had recently been adopted in the Lebanese online newspapers, was because editors-in-chief had become aware that online newspapers do not only rely on the written word and images to tell stories (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Canada and Beirut, 20 March 2014); in addition to reading the news, the audience could now see, hear and react to the events taking place - the online consumer was ‘living’ the news rather than reading it. He added:

the speed of the Internet connection in Lebanon has also improved lately, which made it easier and quicker for the audience to download and watch a video online (Skype: Fady Chami and researcher, Canada and Beirut, 20 March 2014)

One of the obstacles to online newspapers was the prevalence of dial-up connections, as explained earlier in this research, which were simply too slow. Wadih Tueni, pointed out that *Annahar* was a pioneer in uploading short videos: ‘the designers of *Annaharonline* aimed at something original that makes it different from the print copy. That’s how the idea of a WebTV was born on 12 February 2009’. He explained that:

it became clear that although *Annahar* has a large and loyal audience, there are those who will never pick up a newspaper to read their news. They prefer to consume their news in other ways...We felt it was important that *Annahar* had a way of reaching this audience (Skype: Wadih Tueni and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014)

The short videos uploaded on the WebTV were based on the same editorial values and thrust of the main print newsroom version of *Annahar*. They were designed to offer a view of life in Lebanon, more suitable for those who consumed their news through *YouTube* and social networking sites (Brewer, 2009). The videos were produced by a group of journalists, cameramen and editors, exclusively for the online version of *Annahar*, and generally included interviews on certain political, entertainment, and intellectual events; sometimes, the videos were about people

living their lives in Beirut; at other times, they covered short interviews with *Annahar*'s leading newspaper columnists, who explained the key points of the articles they were writing for the print edition.

The videos were located on the front page of *Annaharonline* and their duration ranged between 2 to 10 minutes each. *Annahar* WebTV's slogan is 'Independent, Rigorous and Youthful'. Tueni explained:

it is about offering a n independent, rigorous and youthful perspective on local life, not only for the Lebanese community living in the country, but also for the large Lebanese Diaspora, which is increasingly turning to *Annaharonline* as a trusted news source (Skype: Wadih Tueni and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014)

The ethnographic interviews during 2008-2009, disclosed that Tueni was contemplating of taking the WebTV project to the next level by creating an 'as-live' channel of the weekly playlist of the top videos, and streaming it live over the Internet; however, six years later, the researcher noticed that the project had not been developed, and there were no new videos uploaded on to WebTV. Tueni explained during the interview on 20 May 2014, that the WebTV had ceased to exist, based on an administrative decision; for him, the WebTV, which lasted for a year and a half, was a great success, to the extent that some Lebanese Television institutions such as the LBCI TV (Lebanese Broadcast Corporation International Television) produced a similar TV programme called شاييف حالك (Shayif Halak - Did You See yourself?), but the controlling body did not agree.

The WebTV was supported by the *World Association of Newspapers* (WAN) to which *Annahar* newspaper was affiliated; therefore, financial problems, as the newspapers always claimed, were not the reason for its termination, especially as *Annahar* had recently hired new journalists for its online department. Tueni was focusing on fine-tuning the new video offering, examining the audience figures and planning how to improve and expand it, at no extra cost and from existing *Annahar* resources; it therefore seemed that the new changes in the board of directors, after the death of Ghassan Tueni (on 8 June 2012) had a direct impact on WebTV. *Annaharonline* did not upload more than two or three videos per day, during the period of this study; moreover, all of the videos were used to illustrate stories about social events, mostly taken from news agencies and *YouTube*, hence,

the main reason behind the lack of any political videos such as interviews with politicians or a 'vox pop'¹⁰⁹ series of interviews about a political event. Reine Bou Moussa explained:

we choose our own videos from the Internet and upload them to the news we write. Sometimes it is the other way around: we find a video that has been shared on social media, *YouTube* or on television; in this case, the video becomes the news itself. We just summarise it in a few words and give the viewer the opportunity to see the news in a video format (Skype: Reine Bou Moussa and researcher: Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

Diana Skaini confirmed that journalists working in *Annaharonline* uploaded their own videos; according to her:

the work in an online newspaper depends on speed and time; therefore, the journalist does not have the time to send his video to the IT to place it on the news website [...] we are looking forward to the time when our journalists will be able to write, shoot and edit their own videos (Skype: Diana Skaini and researcher: Beirut and Canada, 20 May 2014).

News stories in *Annaharonline* that had a video, also contained pictures for the same story; for example, a story published on 25 April 2014 with the title: Chiah: we are the Municipality and the People, had a slide show of three pictures from the conference held, a 3.16 minute second video, in addition to a written account (see figure 8.3 below).

¹⁰⁹ Vox Pop - from the Latin phrase, *vox populi*, meaning 'voice of the people'. The 'vox pop' is a tool used in many forms of media to provide a snapshot of public opinion.
<http://www.mediacollege.com/video/interviews/vox pops.html> [retrieved 18 November 2014]



Source: <http://www.annahar.com/article/128419> [retrieved 25 April 2014]

Figure 8.3: A story in *Annaharonline* that contains text, slide pictures and a video

The use of multimedia, as in the story illustrated in the figure 8.3 above, is confusing and time-consuming, since all three multimedia used the text, slide pictures and the video with the same content; they did not add any value to the text, or vice versa. MacGregor (2003) identified this as a ‘sensory gap’ that occurs

when media users are switching from one medium to another; according to him, online reading is different from watching a web video or listening to web radio, or a combination of both. This online ‘zapping’ from an online text to an online video leads to the activation of some sensory activities, while others are deactivated; for example, when multiple media are fully integrated on one web page, the news consumer is able to read the story while watching a video fragment and listening to an interview; in this case, the different senses associated with the specific news media remain activated, and the online news consumers experience a multimodal and multisensory effect.

The main page of *Aldiyaronline*, on the other hand, included several videos; each day, more than ten videos were uploaded on the news website, resulting in the online newspaper creating a ‘video’ album for all the videos that had been uploaded on the website. It was observed that all the videos in *Annaharonline* were associated with social news, and videos in *Aldiyaronline* mainly supported social news and very rarely political or sports news; moreover, the uploaded videos were taken from news agencies or *YouTube*. Raja Mihtar explained:

Aldiyaronline does not have the financial capacity to shoot its own videos. This requires hiring additional staff such as a cameraman and an editor in addition to all the tools necessary for this job. Why should we do so, when we can, in a second, upload a video from *YouTube*, for example? [...] It’s a time-consuming and money-wasting job (Skype: Raja Mihtar and researcher, Beirut and Canada, 27 May 2014)

The content analysis uncovered some interesting phenomena, one of which was that the videos in *Aldiyaronline* were uploaded without any text (except for the title) to explain the story; consequently, the reader or viewer was obliged to ‘click’ on the video in order to understand the story; this procedure is confusing and frustrating, especially as the Internet connection in Lebanon is very slow; for example, the researcher has had to sometimes wait for up to an hour, in order to download a ten-minute video¹¹⁰.

News that is presented in different modalities, incomprehensible if presented in isolation, compels news users to divide their attention between the features, in

¹¹⁰ This was experienced during the researcher’s visit to Lebanon in January and February 2014.

order to understand the whole message; according to some scholars (Chandler and Sweller, 1992; Mayer and Moreno, 1998), this multimodal presentation leads to a split-attention effect that causes a cognitive load on information processing, and hence, results in a reduced learning outcome.

Figure 8.4 below shows a news story uploaded in *Aldiyaronline* which includes a video and a picture but lacks any text:



Source: <http://www.charlesayoub.com/more/738551> [retrieved 25 April 2014]

Figure 8.4: A story in *Aldiyaronline* that contains a picture and a video without any text

The born-on-the-web newspaper, Elnashra, was devoid of any videos on stories about politics, the economy, sports, miscellaneous, crime, international or local

events; however, the content analysis did show that the only videos uploaded were on the 'showbiz' page, which covered stories relating to performing artists (scandals, latest work, news, albums, and so on, of singers, actors, musicians in Lebanon, the Middle East and worldwide); most of the uploaded material was the new songs or releases (video clips) of a singer or a team; although *Elnashra*'s staff included a cameraman and a photographer, it did not have any original videos – the majority of the videos were taken from agencies or from *YouTube*. Semaan believed that videos usually accompanied soft news, for which the journalist had time to find a video that explained his or her story and which added significant value to it. He said:

When we cover breaking events involving top leaders, major issues, political crisis or significant disruptions in the routines of daily life, there is no room for videos (Interview :Joseph Semaan, Beirut, 8 September 2008).

Figure 8.5 below shows a story published in *Elnashra* on 25 April 2014, which tells the story of the latest video clip of a Lebanese singer called Miriam Attalah. The story includes a picture of the singer, a video clip, and a text describing the clip.





Source: <http://www.elnashrafan.com/news/show/1083876> [retrieved 25 April 2014]

Figure 8.5: A story in *Elnashra* that contains text, a picture and a video

The question arises, therefore, what is the advantage of adding multimedia to *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*, if it does not enrich the story or the experience of the reader or viewer? There are two aims for using multimedia in electronic newspapers: first, rather than reading a rigidly structured single narrative, the user may choose how to navigate through the elements of a story; second, rather than having a text version of a story accompanied by a video clip that essentially tells the same story, different parts of a story can be viewed using several media systems¹¹¹. The key to using enlightening multimedia, lacking in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* (as previously discussed) is to select and upload the media form such as video, audio, photographs, text, and animation, which will present a segment of a story in the most compelling and informative way: it should add to the story, not repeat the same information in a different format.

This research found that, according to the three studied newspapers, videos were another way of telling the same story; by using moving pictures, most of the stories were simultaneously accompanied by a video, text and a set of pictures. Videos, according to the interviews conducted with the editors-in-chief and journalists working in the online departments of these three newspapers, were

¹¹¹ http://www.sej.org/sites/default/files/sej_sp10.pdf [retrieved 18 November 2014]

visual proof that the information written in the story was ‘real’, and therefore added value to soft news; on the other hand, hard news depended on speed and time, consequently, writing, shooting and editing a story for the online newspapers was a costly and time-consuming process.

Andy Dickinson, who teaches online journalism at the University of Central Lancashire, in the United Kingdom, conducted a survey (in 2007) to investigate exactly how time-consuming a newspaper video shoot is. Dickinson found that the average video, after editing, is two to three minutes long; however, the average production time is two to four hours¹¹².

Dickinson concluded that, typically, it takes one hour to produce one minute of video. Wadih Tueni, the IT manager of *Annahar* described the job routine of a photojournalist:

sometimes it takes as much as two hours to get to a job, one to three hours to shoot, up to two hours driving back to the office, numerous hours of editing, and then we have a two-minute video, after about eight to ten hours of work. That comes out at four to five hours for a one-minute video (Interview: Wadih Tueni, Beirut, 7 October 2008)”

The invention of newer technology, such as Youtube Video Editor, Pixorial, WeVideo and FileLab Video Editor, have allowed editors to shoot, edit and upload a video in a few minutes, but the creation of a video still requires the hiring of a professional editor and buying the latest technology and equipment.

Lebanese online newspapers were still debating whether they should use videos from other websites, or shoot their own, original ones; in the meantime, scholars were calculating the time required to produce an online news video. The learning curve is very steep and Lebanese newspapers were still investigating the best use for multimedia in electronic newspapers.

David Leeson, a still photographer who began shooting videos for the *Dallas Morning News* in 2000, sees videos as part of the natural evolution of

¹¹² <http://viewmag.blogspot.com/2007/11/andy-dickinsons-video-survey.html> [retrieved 18 November 2014]

photography, which is not so different from earlier innovations, such as the advent of colour films. He recalls:

For a few years you had to carry a camera loaded with colour [film] and a camera loaded with black and white. Otherwise, they'd say, "Do you have it in colour?" and you'd say, "No, I don't". [...] I think the same thing is happening now. The question right now is, "Do you have the video?" (Layton, 2008)

In conclusion, the content analysis in this research found that the videos uploaded in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* mainly accompanied social and art news, and told the identical story in the three studied newspapers, as the text or pictures – a repetition of the same content in a different format, which does not add anything new to the text version or the photograph. Videos in *Annaharonline* and *Elnashra* were accompanied by texts and pictures, but some videos in *Aldiyaronline* lacked any text and required the reader to watch the video to understand the news story; furthermore, all three online newspapers uploaded videos directly on to their websites, without any links to *YouTube* or other source sites. Videos uploaded on *Annaharonline* were occasionally those which had been shared on social media, *YouTube* or on television, therefore rather than the video adding to the news, it became the news itself. It was observed during the period of this study, that none of the videos uploaded on to the three Lebanese newspapers were taken or shot by a reporter or a journalist employed by the online newspapers.

8.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter showed that the editors-in-chief of the three Lebanese newspapers being studied were not fully aware of the term 'interactivity'; although *Annaharonline*, *Elnashra* and *Aldiyaronline* had recently adopted more interactive features, this research found that all three online newspapers were not aware of how to benefit from the use of interactivity – 'for an online newspaper to be truly interactive it must facilitate communication between humans through human interactive features', according to Outing (1998). He argues that the Internet is a two-way medium, and for websites to excel at interactivity they must bring people together and promote communication among web users, as well as between web users and web staff members and managers.

The use of some interactive features such as multimedia has raised concerns of whether it will put an end to the dull, narrative texts used by traditional newspapers: instead of a single linear narrative, a ‘multimedia story’, for example, can be broken up into a series of narratives, presented in different media formats - text, video, audio, photographic slideshows, and graphics; this makes the storytelling more engaging, and readers can explore different aspects, according to their own interests; two-way communication was introduced by the ‘commenting on the news’ feature, not only between the newspaper and the reader, but also among the readers themselves.

Annaharonline, *Elnashra* and *Aldiyaronline* used most of the multimedia features: text, video and pictures (static and slideshows) in a single news story, rather than posting the type that was most appropriate to the nature of the story being told - the dilemma lies in when interactive features replace in-depth news, and the result will be constant bursts of information that lack any context or objective data, yet are accompanied by a deluge of raw videos and pictures.

The findings of this research showed that not all online readers were engaged in interactivity: *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* included the option of commenting on the news, but *Aldiyaronline* did not receive any comments; conversely, some of the comments written in *Annaharonline* included racist, vulgar, and menacing language towards the newspaper or journalist.

This study also found that news relating to social topics in general, and those which included sexual terminology in their contexts and titles, in particular, had the most interactive features: videos were mainly uploaded to social and art news stories in *Annaharonline* and *Elnashra* and also had the highest number of comments.

Brown (2000, p. 26) suggested that by adopting interactivity in their online news, journalists expect to bring people ‘closer to the news’; however, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* were not very successful in bringing people together or closer; for example, the born-on-the-web newspaper *Elnashra* excluded the chat, forum, email address, videos, slide pictures and commenting from the

interactive news features; moreover, while *Aldiyaronline* was attempting to engage with its audience through uploading a variety of multimedia options such as videos and pictures, its pages still lacked any comments or interaction between the journalist and the reader or viewer. The comments written on *Annaharonline*, on the other hand, indicated that the audience was trying to interact with the newspaper's social news and with other readers, yet the lack of multimedia features such as exclusive videos proved that the newspaper was still being cautious in fully interacting with its readers.

A study conducted by the *Newspaper Association of America Foundation*¹¹³ and *North-western University's Media Management Center*¹¹⁴ (Grabowicz, 2014) found that teenagers preferred background information and context for stories, as well as visuals such as photographs and graphics, to make the content a more compelling viewing or reading experience; it could be argued that younger people lack the attention span for reading in-depth stories or long and complex narratives, therefore, by targeting a younger audience, the main aim was to include more interactive features in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*. The editors-in-chief of the three online newspapers made it clear that they were hoping that the interactive features, such as more multimedia options on their websites, would grasp the attention of teenagers, university students and the youth, and encourage them to read the news online; however, as previously mentioned, in order to achieve their target, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* must know why, how, where and when to use interactive features.

It appears, therefore, that the potential of interactivity afforded by Lebanese online newspapers was cast in a rosy light, with exaggerated excitement over audience adoption of interactive features. The findings from this research suggest that online audiences in Lebanon were not using interactive features extensively, contrary to the expectations of the news industry. These findings indicate that online news editors-in-chief should be more selective in their adoption of interactive

¹¹³ <http://www.naa.org/> [retrieved 20 November 2014]

¹¹⁴ <http://www.mediamanagementcenter.org/> [retrieved 20 November 2014]

technological elements, promoted through various web features, in order to attract their target audiences; by focusing instead, on using the interactive features that best promote the nature of the news they are writing, they may be more successful in their aims.

Finally, this research provided somewhat discouraging results from the initial enthusiasm regarding online news and the adoption of interactive features in Lebanese online newspapers; however, the attempt at using interactivity in *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* was considered to be a positive step towards incorporating new technology, although some of it was inappropriate or excessive. Rafaeli (1988) suggests: ‘the consequences of interactivity are satisfaction, motivation, sense of fun, cognition and learning’, therefore, the benefit of using suitable interactive features would probably attract a larger audience through chat room fora, which would not only involve the audiences and journalists, but also the readers and viewers.

Chapter Nine: Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this research is to study the adoption of, and adaptation to, new technologies in the Lebanese online newspapers. This chapter presents a general discussion of the issues that have been investigated throughout the study. It was stated that the study would pose four sets of questions related to the rationale for launching online newspapers and their development, the implication of new media technology adoption for newsroom communication routines, production process and employment criteria and the use of interactive features. These issues need to be considered in the wider context of the evolution of the Internet as a 'new medium', contrary to what Selvin (2000, p.11) suggests that 'the Internet is somehow a sudden invention, governed solely by conditions internal to its own technological development'.

The invention of the telegraph, radio and television imposed many new challenges on print newspapers, and publishers generally adopted and adapted to these new means of communication over the decades. The advent of the Internet, however, proved to have a far more direct impact on traditional newspapers. Print media for example, generally saw this new technology in a positive light and realised that advantage could be taken of its capabilities: print newspapers were the first mass media to appear online through their newspaper websites (Bokesoy, 2008) by using the Internet as a supplementary channel for distributing their content to a wider group of readers. Faced with such a formidable adversary however, small and large newspapers alike had no choice but to abandon their old-style methods for a more innovative and interactive approach. Online newspapers are therefore the new phenomenon in the communication world. The study of old and new media is a challenging topic for media scholars, as Li (1998) points out, and can be approached from several aspects. This thesis, however, has focused on studying the adoption and adaptation of new technologies in Lebanese online newspapers; although many were launched in 1996, some of them did not adapt to this new technology until 2011 (see Chapter Five).

This study began with an analysis of news in the Internet age, which was found to be a continually evolving phenomenon. During the course of investigating the Lebanese online newspapers, it was observed that many changes had taken place in their content, design, type of journalists employed, technology used, newsroom routines, speed of communication and characteristics. This chapter examines these issues in the wider context of the adoption and adaptation of new technology and the current trends in online newspapers. It will also provide an insight into the rationale, development and interactive features adopted and adapted by Lebanese online newspapers. The chapter closes by stating the limitations of the study and offering recommendations for further research in the field.

9.1 Lebanese Online Newspapers

One of the most important observations this study revealed is the major shift of existing Arab and Lebanese printed products appearing online (Internet) in one form or another and the wide acceptance of this new medium. This trend is of considerable importance, taking into account the social, economic and political environment that Lebanon has experienced, as it corresponds with those in many parts of the world. The introduction of Lebanon as a unique yet precarious country showed that the current Lebanese media landscape is a reflection of Lebanon's political and economic situation. It was found that, in spite of the numerous challenges that Lebanon faced (and is still facing), because of its location and political struggles, the Lebanese mass media were not entirely weakened. The political turmoil, especially during the 15 years of civil war, permitted the implementation of certain legal measures vital to Lebanon's future, including the fields of information and media technology. It is remarkable that Lebanon became one of the first Arab countries to embrace the Internet, regardless of the damage incurred during the civil war, and the inherent difficulties of rebuilding technical infrastructure. Lebanese newspapers were among the first in the region to make use of a technology that had actually been available since 1994.

This research also found that it took a few years for the Internet to spread widely in Lebanon, but the Lebanese were rapidly able to seize the opportunities offered

by the new technology, and interact with digital communication media such as online newspapers.

The analysis of interview data and the data obtained from ethnographic observation of two print newspapers, their electronic versions and a born-on-the-web newspaper revealed in this research that the three online newspapers (*Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra*) were launched in order to conform to the prevailing technological flow. That was especially the case with *Aldiyaronline*. *Annaharonline* aimed at reaching a wider international audience, and *Elnashra* provided updated news to its readers in a more modern way. The findings of this research supported Jad Melki *et al.*'s report (2012) entitled, *Mapping Digital Media: Lebanon*, which states that the slow development of online newspapers in Lebanon seemed to be influenced by 'political events'. The economic and financial crisis caused by the political turmoil also had negative effects on the newspaper industry in Lebanon. The research argued that innovation is widely dispersed throughout media firms and is intrinsic to many everyday tasks. However, the Lebanese newspapers examined in this study frequently failed to address the challenges presented by technological innovations that revolutionised their sector of industry, 'leaving the field open to new entrants' (Hill and Rothaermel, 2003).

This research also found that many factors were essential for the birth of and development of online newspapers in Lebanon. They included the 'Arab Spring', the use of social media, the Lebanese Diaspora, technological flows, economic issues and competition in media industries. Three main factors influenced the development of Thai newspapers, according to Danaya Holloway's research (2009, pp. 253-255): technological flow, the competition in the media business, and the economic issues; similar factors were at play in the Lebanese newspaper sector.

Finally, this research showed that all three studied newspapers were in the process of adopting and adapting to new technologies. Online newspapers are characterised by enhanced features that use technology to bring people closer to

the news - but this process was prolonged in the case of Lebanon; by 2014, *Annaharonline*, *Aldiyaronline* and *Elnashra* had evolved from a non-interactive, passive model of information delivery into an environment of increased immediacy and content richness.

9.2 Major Changes

This research found that the Lebanese online newspapers had evolved since their establishment. The major changes were linked to the advancement of the Internet as 'new media'. The Internet, as Li (2006) states, brought about a new era for newspapers. The quick shift from print to online newspapers epitomises the flood of technological changes that newspapers have experienced in past decades: 'journalism has always been shaped by technology', according to Pavlik (2000, p. 229). This showed that the adoption of the new technology also put pressure on journalists to perform multiple tasks and combine news-gathering and story-telling techniques in different media formats. This pressure blended long-standing work flows with novel demands, and expresses what Bromley (1997) calls 'multiskilling' or 'de-reification of media options' Boczkowski (2004a, p. 123). Deuze (2004, p. 144) also argues that news producers are expected to carry out additional tasks for 'the same salary as before'. Journalists of the print copies initially managed to carry on with the new task added to their busy job schedule, since the online version was a 'replica copy' (Ajko, 2006, p. 43) or 'shovelware' (Boczkowski, 2004, p. 55) of the print product. The formation of an online department, however, and the creation of a distinctive online news genre, and the addition of more interactive features to online content, required the Lebanese online newspapers to hire new, full-time journalists to work in their online departments. They also started offering training sessions for their journalists in order 'to choose what medium or media to use for a particular story' (Boczkowski, 2004a, p. 123) and to deal with 'high-speed news' (Pavlik, 2000, p. 232).

The findings of this research support McAdams's (1998) perspective that, although Internet technology is rapidly growing, newspapers on the Internet still approached it from their roots in traditional print. They adopt the Internet network

as their new delivery channel. The majority of print newspapers in Lebanon began to publish online, but when this study was being concluded in 2014, they were still at the stage of developing original content or material for online production.

Some studies have found that established journalistic operations, such as online newspapers, have tended to ignore the potential of new technology, thus affecting limited change across the industry (Boczkowski, 2004a; Cohen, 2002; Deuze, 2003; García, 2008; Garrison, 2005; Quandt, 2008a; Quinn, 2005). This research found, however, that the Lebanese online newspapers eventually realised the wide scope offered by the Internet, and the importance of publishing online. They thought that by ‘shovelling’ the content of their print newspaper onto a website with the same name as the paper, it would become an online newspaper; moreover, this research found that the Internet played an important role in the development of the Lebanese newspapers. It shaped the concept of a news website and facilitated the work of journalists. The data collected in this research, built on Mark Deuze’s argument in *Media Work* (2007) that technology is not an independent factor influencing journalistic work from outside, rather technology must be seen in terms of implementation, and how it extends and amplifies previous operational tactics from the inside. It also supports John Pavlik’s (2000) assertion that journalism has always been shaped by technology.

9.2.1 Interactivity

This research also found that changes added unique characteristics to online newspapers such as ‘interactivity’ between products and services (text, animation, games) displayed on computer-based systems and users (Jensen, 1998; Schultz 2000, p. 205). A range of avenues available or, as Al-Abdullah states: ‘diversity in publishing the news regarding the unlimited space and capacity’ (2005 p. 219). Sakr suggests ‘flexibility in the news content’ (1999, p. 68) which supports McAdams idea that these changes offered ‘additional functionalities, such as the electronic-mail addresses of editors and reporters and links to other sources of information, including original documents’ (pp. 30-34). Deuze (2013) asserts that ‘the presentation of [a] news story in a multimedia format’ is attractive to users as

it is 'easy to gain access to news stories' (Dominick, 2009, pp. 97-98) and 'news is positioned in real time or continuously updated' (Wurff and Lauf, 2005, p. 19), unlike traditional media.

There is no doubt that the use of interactivity in online versions offers two-way communication in new media; however, this study concluded that online newspapers in Lebanon did not fully utilise the benefits of interactivity, especially in their early stages of development. It is acknowledged that the three online newspapers covered by this study have dramatically improved their use of modern technology, although they still require additional development in order to be more competitive.

The findings on the use of interactive elements by three online newspapers in Lebanon can be explained by several studies. McGregor (1998) for instance, mentions that an online newspaper is usually a website created and maintained by a print media or organisation. He concludes that the large variety of online newspapers testifies to the power and essence of media convergence – the use of traditional media (text, still photographs, graphics, audio, and video) together with new media (hypertext, image maps and other interactive tools) in a multidimensional, digital environment. Li (1998) also confirms that online newspapers give a higher priority to providing textual rather than graphic information, and large graphics are more likely to appear on homepages than on front pages, or pages featuring news articles.

The outcome of the use of interactive elements on electronic newspaper samples indicated that interactivity has more benefits for readers. Li (1998) points out that news links and multiple communication channels adopted by online newspapers in webpage designs create a new communication environment that involves more than the host newspaper and the initial audience. This study has suggested that print newspapers were late in publishing online versions. Online versions in Lebanon were considered to be an addition to the print copy. Their aim was to serve readers outside of the country who had to pay the high costs of purchasing hard copies of Lebanese newspapers. The volatile political and economic situation

in Lebanon had negatively affected the adoption of new technology by online newspapers.

The findings of this research also showed that not all online readers were engaged in these new ideas: *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* included the option of commenting on the news, but *Aldiyaronline* did not receive any comments; conversely, some of the comments written in *Annaharonline* included racist, vulgar, and menacing language towards the newspaper or journalists.

The findings in this study support the views of Boczkowski, 2003; Singer, 1998; Holloway, 2009; Huang, 2005; McAdams, 1998; and Li, 1998 on the diffusion of innovation theory. The findings from the content analysis similarly complexify and enrich studies by Dennis (2006), Deuze (2007), Dupagne and Garrison (2006), and Quinn (2005), which focused on organisational integration of print, broadcast and online operations, also termed convergence or multimedia.

The data collected from the content analysis concluded that ‘although online media made the participation of users possible, the fact that interactivity was counter-intuitive with the principles of traditional journalistic culture, tended to diminish the willingness to explore audience participation’ (Domingo, 2008a, p. 698). This research also backs claims by Boczkowski (2004a), Cohen (2002), Deuze (2003), García (2008), Garrison (2005), Quandt (2008a), and Quinn (2005) that new technologies effected limited change across the media industry.

Online newspapers in Lebanon were not utilising the full potential of online technologies up until April 2014. Some of them were aware of the importance of multimedia, however, and provided training sessions for their journalists: the role of an online journalist was merely to select the appropriate multimedia material from *Youtube*, instead of creating original material. This supports what Pablo Boczkowski (2004) called the ‘de-reification of media options’ in his book, *Digitizing the News, Innovation in Online Newspapers*. De-reification is a process that blends long-standing workflows with novel demands, and expresses what Bromley (1997) calls ‘multi-skilling’. This research supports the view that modern

technology had increased the tasks of media workers, thus shifting newspapers to a new level.

The analysis of the recent adoption of ‘commenting on the news’ feature by some online newspapers, found that the topic of a story affected the number and style of comments made: stories that had ‘race’ and ‘sex’ in their titles or content led to significantly more comments. The ‘commenting on news’ feature was still beyond the expectations of the editors-in-chief and journalists of online newspapers. This supported Domingo’s (2008a, p. 698) ethnographic study of four Spanish online newsrooms, in which he concludes that although online media makes users’ participation possible, the fact that interactivity is counter-intuitive with the principles of traditional journalistic culture it therefore tends to diminish the willingness to explore audience participation.

This research explained how the nature of print and online newspapers differ: print newspapers have limited space, fixed deadlines, and geographical constraints, while the online versions are able to use interactive features, have flexible deadlines, are not limited by space and time, and are generally free to access. Online journalists in Lebanon viewed the Internet as a beneficial tool, particularly as it offered the possibility of searching for information. It became a source for the selection of their videos and images in order to write their news and articles. The Internet was also used in Lebanese print and online newspapers to communicate with other journalists and media organisations.

The study found that a number of differences existed in online newspapers that had descended from their print counterparts and the born-on-the-web newspapers. The latter seemed to be more organised and followed strict criteria when hiring online journalists; moreover, their editorial staff was more professional in the sense that each journalist had a clear job specification. Journalists in the Lebanese print newspapers, on the other hand, were simultaneously playing the role of editor, reporter and photo-journalist.

This research did not study the Lebanese readers of online newspapers, yet it has added to the knowledge of how Lebanese editors-in-chief and journalists adopted

and adapted to this new media technology. Its focus was the development of three Lebanese online newspapers in contrast to Al-Shehri's research which covered most of the Arab online newspapers in general. Al-Shehri's findings established the grounding on which this dissertation was built – it began where Al-Shehri's study ended.

9.2.2 Content, Design and Journalists

This research showed that *Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaronline* developed their own offices, journalists and unique news production system over a period of a few years. The data presented found that the working routines of *Annahar* and *Aldiyar* print newspapers consisted of three processes: gathering information from events and formal resources (collection process); selecting, writing and editing the news, in addition to designing the pages (production process); and finally, printing and distribution of paper copies to readers (printing process). The role of the online journalists, however, was mainly to receive the selected and edited material from the print newspaper versions, convert them to computer language and publish them on the Internet. It also concluded that online newspapers operated different production processes from their print counterparts. Online versions of print newspapers (*Annaharonline* and *Aldiyaroline*) shared almost the same production process with the born-on-the-web newspapers (*Elnashra*); moreover, although they encountered great changes in their design and content in 2011, Lebanese online newspapers of print parents were still reproducing most of the content of their print editions.

The findings of this research indicate that the two Lebanese online newspapers had collaborative relationships with their print versions: online editions joined print newsrooms at the beginning of their production processes. The production time of online versions was reliant on the deadline of print newsrooms, since Lebanese online newspapers used content from the print editions in addition to their exclusive news. Deadlines in a print newspaper are fixed whereas they are flexible in an online newspaper. The majority of online newspapers in Lebanon did not have a separate news policy in selecting and editing the content from print editions

before posting online: they still depended on the print copies to offer them news and pictures. Huxford and Duda argue that a 'clash of cultures' between the two newsrooms hindered the creation of original online content (2000, p. 2).

The findings of this research showed that the Lebanese online newspapers were changing the type of journalism practiced in newsrooms - they also seemed to be playing a role in how those newsrooms were staffed. All three samples studied agreed that computer skills and languages were the two main factors for hiring online journalists. The relationship between the print and online newsroom staff demonstrated that they worked closely together in terms of sharing news resources and material.

These findings also supported Holloway's research which concludes that the content of the Thai electronic newspapers was virtually the same as that of their print versions - they had been created only as a supplement to their printed newspapers. The similarities in news content and news policy between print and electronic editions supported the notion that electronic newspapers may give up a major portion of their role in news selection or gate-keeping (Holloway, 2009, p. 284).

9.3 Research versus Theory

The theoretical part of this research highlighted the characteristics of Rogers' diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory, the adoption and decision processes, and the qualities of success required for a change to be approved by a society. It also examined the history, orientation, definition and limitations of the theory. Nguyen (2007) agrees with Everett Rogers' theory, maintaining that adaption of new technology depends on the people who create, use and respond to it. It has been observed in this research, that when it comes to reading news online, the Lebanese passed through the five elements of Rogers' DOI theory (innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards). One of the themes that emerged was that most Lebanese websites remained in the 'trial stage' for a long time. The three studied Lebanese newspapers were still encountering changes in their design and content, even editors and journalists were late in applying new

technologies to their communication routines and production processes until the date of this research (2014). Readers were reluctant to adopt the 'habit' of reading news online.

The DOI theory concluded that (a) technologies are discrete packages developed by independent and neutral innovators; (b) technologies diffuse in a homogeneous and fixed social ether called a 'diffusion arena', which is separate from the innovation locale; (c) diffusion rate is a function of push and pull forces. The push factors include features of technology and channels of communication. The pull factors are determined by the adopter's reasoning; (d) adoption decisions are dependent on available information, preference functions and adopter's properties; (e) diffusion traverses through distinct stages which exhibit little or no feedback; and (f) time scales are relatively short and the diffusion history is not important (Rogers 1995; Mahajan, Muller, and Bass, 1990, pp. 1-26).

The application of this theory to the adaptation and adoption of new technologies by the Lebanese newspapers revealed that they are not discrete packages developed by independent and neutral innovators. Middle Eastern countries such as Lebanon have to consider that the local culture and supporting infrastructure (education system, government policies and economic factors), together with the institutional arrangements and business context reshape the diffusion arenas. The decision to adopt an online version was consequently obligatory within a restricted time period if they wanted to remain in business. The decision to adapt to the online features required a long time span in Lebanon, however - it took a few stages for the Lebanese online newspapers to move from a simple adoption to an industrial level.

This research, therefore, applied the DOI theory in order to understand how the Lebanese online newspapers adopted and adapted to new technology, in order to investigate the rationale and development of these online newspapers. Their production processes, communication routines and the use of interactive features were also examined.

Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory (DOI) (2003) was used, not only in order to examine the factors behind the foundation and progress of online newspapers in Lebanon, but also to explain how and why people (such as editors-in-chief and journalists) took the decision (or were reluctant) to adopt new technology in their newsroom communication routines and production processes, and also to categorise the people who adopted the new technologies.

Rogers' diffusion of innovation (see Chapter 3), the theoretical framework of this research, was deemed the most appropriate for investigating the adoption of technology in the newspaper industry. Rogers usually uses the words 'technology' and 'innovation' synonymously: for Rogers 'a technology is a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome' (2003, p. 13). He believes that there are four key components: innovation, communication channels, time, and social systems (p. 5). He also states that 'individuals' perceptions of the five characteristics of innovation predict the rate of adoption of innovations' (p. 219). Rogers concludes that 'getting a new idea adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is difficult' (p. 1), therefore he classifies the adopters into five categories (2003, p. 171).

The advantages of using Rogers' theory in this study were various. It not only helped to understand why online newspapers in Lebanon were late in adopting and adapting to new technology, for example, but also helped to answer the research questions: why have newspapers in Lebanon launched online versions?, and how have the three Lebanese online newspapers under study, adapted to the new media technologies?

The adoption process requires five stages, according to the diffusion of innovation theory: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. Rogers defines the innovation-decision progression as:

the process through which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation and use of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision (2003, p.231).

This research revealed that although the editors-in-chief of the three studied Lebanese online newspapers ‘showed interest’ in adopting an online newspaper, they remained in the ‘trial’ stage for fifteen years¹¹⁵, due, in part, to the Lebanese political situation over that period. Rogers’ theory neglects to point out that, in some countries such as those in the Middle East, the political and economic situation could have a direct impact on the innovation process. The decisions that Lebanese media industry, particularly print newspapers, had to make in adopting or rejecting new technology were challenging in a climate of war and an unstable economy.

Second, although this thesis applied Rogers’ theory only to editors-in-chief and journalists, the theory remained helpful in improving the understanding of the work routines and production processes in Lebanese newspapers. The successful adoption of an innovation relies on having a relative advantage and should be compatible in values and practice, should be simple and easy to use, ‘triable’ (able to be tested) and have observable results. The findings of this research backed up Rogers’ theory: the Lebanese passed through the five elements regarding reading news online (see Chapter Six). This research found that online newspapers in Lebanon fell between the ‘late majority’ and the ‘laggards’ categories. It remained circumspect, in spite of the country being recognised as one of the first in the Middle East to experiment with online news.

Rogers’ most recent edition of diffusion of innovation (2003), warned that this theory might perform differently in the Internet environment, by changing the diffusion process in fundamental ways: the removal or reduction, for instance, of spatial distance regarding who talks to whom about a new idea. It consequently becomes difficult, if not impossible, to define a social system. Rogers writes that the Internet functions as both a mass communication channel (websites) and an

¹¹⁵ The first online newspaper in Lebanon was launched in 1996, but the online departments and interactive features were not adopted until 2011 (Ajko A., *The Arabic Electronic Journalism: Present and Future*, 2006, p. 51)

interpersonal medium (e-mails). It blurs the distinction between the effects of mass and personal interactive communication. The examination of the Lebanese newspaper scenario showed that Rogers' classifications could be applied to the editors-in-chief and journalists in the adoption, adaptation and decision-making processes, particularly regarding the Internet. This study went beyond Rogers' theory, however, by revealing that external factors, such as the Arab Spring, the use of social media, Lebanese emigration, technological flows and competition in media industries, played a major role in the adoption and adaptation to new technology by Lebanese newspapers.

9.4 Limitations

It is important to note the limitations that the researcher faced, when conducting new media studies. The most significant issue was the restriction encountered when studying technology, including the media, due to its continuing evolution. Another problem was the comparison and analysis of online newspapers that had a solid background due to their descent from established print newspapers (*Annahar* and *Aldiyar*) and a newly-born news website that had no previous history (*Elnashra*). The three online newspapers were still in the developmental stages during the periods in which this study was conducted (2008 and 2014). They were experimenting with content presentation and webpage design; therefore, collecting sufficient data from 'inexperienced' online newspapers was not always possible. The advantages of studying three online newspapers at their earliest stages of expansion, in terms of historical content, provided some data, although it may not have illustrated the full potential of Lebanese news media in a modern age. This research achieved important intellectual findings and primary data, however, despite these limitations. The results may have wider implications on Lebanese mass media, in general, and online newspapers, specifically.

The limitations of the above-mentioned study, offer an opportunity to present some recommendations for further studies, in the following section.

9.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The online newspaper is a new phenomenon in Lebanese journalistic research. The evolution of this new medium is worth studying through a longitudinal content analysis (Li, 2006). This approach allows for a more comprehensive examination of the changes occurring in online newspapers. A comparative study of the development of online newspapers in Lebanon, in the period following this study, would illustrate the changes and improvements that may have occurred, in both general and specific terms.

The study of the adoption of, and adaptation to new technology by online newspaper readers, and their mutual relationship, would possibly uncover further reasons for the overall acceptance of the existing popular news figures - who are merely present for commercial, descriptive, and marketing purposes - and how they react to this new phenomenon in different countries or places, compared to Lebanon - further examination would shed light on the demographic distribution of online readers: their ages, aims, Internet connectivity practices, and finally, their universal and specific attitudes towards news websites.

The strategies and rationale that some Arab governments, including Lebanon, are taking in order to censor news published online, could be explored (after the Arab Spring, for example), and the circumvention tools used by the youth, especially as, by the end of this decade, the most popular means of accessing newspapers online, will probably be on mobile devices, rather than desktop computers or laptops¹¹⁶. The relationship of social media and online newspapers in the Middle East, and Lebanon, particularly, could be investigated, in order to show the similarities and differences, if any, and the reasons for these.

This research focuses primarily on three Lebanese online newspapers; further studies could examine other Arab online media and international newspapers, and how they differ (or not) from the Lebanese approach.

¹¹⁶ Burrell I., 4 April 2011, 'Ft: The Pink 'Un powers on', *The Independent*, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/online/ft-the-pink-un-powers-on-2261210.html> [retrieved 18 November 2014]

Finally, it is hoped that this research has shed light on the evolution of simple printing techniques to today's sophisticated digital communication, particularly the 'marriage' between online newspapers and the Internet in Lebanon. The political, economic, and cultural difficulties that the country has faced have impeded the rapid progress of the adoption of modern technology and the adaptation it demands.

Bibliography

- Abed Al-Rahman, A. 2001. 'The Challenges of Arabic Media in the Shadow of Globalization', *تحديات الاعلام العربي في ظل العولمة*, in *Annahar Newspaper*, Beirut, November 8, Issue number 21101, p. 10
- Abed Al-Wajid, R. 2007. 'Electronic Journalism', (الصحافة الالكترونية), Cairo: Dar Al-Fajir for publishing and distributing
- Abu Fadil, M. 2013. 'Lebanese Media Far from Being Accountable', *The Huffington Post*, 4 February, available at: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/?m=true> [retrieved 29 July 2014]
- Abu Laban, B. 1966. 'Factors in Social Control of the Press in Lebanon', *Journalism and Mass Communications Quarterly*, Issue 43, no. 3, p. 514
- Ahrens, F. 2005. 'Ink and Paper or 1s and 0s? Nervous, Newspapers Look to Technology for Alternate Ways to Put the News in Your Hands', *The Washington Post*, available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/10/14/AR2005101402033.html> [retrieved 18 April 2009]
- Ajami, J. 2009. 'The Future of the Printed Newspapers', paper presented at the *Language and Media Conference* at Notre Dame University, Beirut
- Ajko, A. 2006. 'The Arabic Electronic Journalism: Present and Future', (الصحافة الالكترونية العربية: الواقع والافاق), in *The Conference Facts on the Online Journalism in the Arab World: Reality and Challenges* وقائع مؤتمر صحافة الانترنت في العالم العربي: الواقع والتحديات (ed. Ali Abdel Rahman Awad), University of Sharjah: Faculty of Higher Education and Academic Research, Sharjah, pp. 34-56
- Al-Abdallah, M. 2005. 'Communication and Democracy', (الاعلام والديمقراطية), Beirut: Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabia
- Alam Il-Deen, M. 1998. 'The Internet and the Future of the Newspaper Industry', (شبكة الانترنت ومستقبل صناعة الصحافة), 23 November, *Al-Ahram Newspaper*: Egypt
- Al Gore, A. 1994. 'Forging a new Athenian age of Democracy', *Intermedia*, Vol. 27, No. 2, p. 4
- Al-Grayen, S. 2001. 'The Electronic and Paper Journalism', (الصحيفة الالكترونية والورقية: دراسة مقارنة في المفهوم والسمات الاساسية بالتطبيق على الصحف الالكترونية المصرية), University of Cairo: Faculty of Media, October-December issue, p. 213
- Al-Hoss, S. 1984. 'Lebanon at the Crossroads', لبنان على المفترق, Beirut: Beirut Arab Center

- Al-Husseini, R. 2005. 'The Emirates is First Arabic Wise, 1.5 Billion Website Internationally, Lebanon is Connected Although the Internet Prices are High', (الامارات الاولى عربياً... 1.5 مليار موقع عالمياً، لبنان متصل رغم ارتفاع سعر الانترنت), in *Annahar Newspaper*: Beirut, 3 March, Issue number 22239, p. 16
- Al-Husseini, R. 2006. 'Report on Electronic Journalism' (تقرير الصحافة الالكترونية), in *Annahar Newspaper*: Beirut, November 5, Issue number 22824, p. 16
- Alik, B. 2010. 'The Media of 14 March and the Novel of the US Delegation's visit', (إعلام 14 آذار ورواية زيارة الوفد الأميركي), *Al-Intiqad Online Newspaper*, available at: <http://www.alintiqad.com> [retrieved 5 March 2011]
- Ali, N. 2001. 'The Arabic Culture and the Information Era', (الثقافة العربية وعصر المعلومات), *The World of Knowledge: a monthly educational book series produced by The National Council for Education, Art and Literature: Kuwait, January, Special Edition 265*, p. 344
- Aljami, M. 2011. 'Modelling Student Perception of Web 2.0 Technology adoption in Kuwait', doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas, available at: <http://gradworks.umi.com/34/86/3486470.html> [retrieved 12 June 2014]
- Al-Jasim, M. 2006. 'The Influence of Electronic Media in the Development of the Arab Socio- Politics', (تأثير الاعلام الالكتروني في التطور الاجتماعي- السياسي العربي), in *The Arab Media in the Era of Information*, (الاعلام العربي في عصر المعلومات): Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, p. 179
- Al-Othman, F. 2006. 'Enriching the Arabic Content of the Internet', (اثراء المحتوى العربي), in *The Arab Media in the Era of Information*, (الاعلام العربي في عصر المعلومات): Abu Dhabi, U.A.E., The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, p. 215
- Al-Qasim, S. 2002. 'The Strategy of Science and Culture Development in the Arab World: an Analytical Study for Modernisation and Application', Paper presented to the Arab Meeting on the Application of Science and Culture Development Strategy in the Arab World, Sharjah: Egypt
- Al-Salam. 2008. 'The 4th ICT Security forum in Syria', July, available at: <http://www.alsalam.co.sy/?d=22&id=30> [retrieved 16 February 2012]
- Al-Samawi, M. 2008. 'Politics by Inheritance', (الوراثة السياسية), *Anabaa Online newspaper*, 11 February, available at: www.anabaa.org [retrieved 25 February 2011]
- Al-Shehri, F. 2000. 'Electronic Newspapers on the Internet: A Study of the Production and Consumption of Arabic Dailies on the World Wide Web', a Ph.D. research dissertation, submitted to the department of Journalism Studies at University of Sheffield, U.K.

Al-Yahyawi, Y., 2007. 'Arabs and the Knowledge Networks, A Study in One Places and in Places', (العرب وشبكات المعرفة: دراسة في الموقع والمواقع), Beirut: Dar Al-Talia Publisher

Al-Zabad, A. E. K. 2001. 'The Annual Statistical Book', (الكتاب الإحصائي السنوي), produced by UNESCO in 1999

Andersen, N.B.; Rasmussen, L.B.; and Rasmussen, S. 2009. 'Web 2.0 adoption by Danish newspapers – urgent need for new business models', *Journal of Universal Computer Science*, 14(3), pp. 692-703

Annahar Newspaper, 1993. 'Annahar Brochure', Beirut: Dar Annahar for Publication

Annahar Newspaper, 2000. 'Statistics of Data and Investment: 29% for Email, 19% for communicating with Others, and 3% for Wasting Time' (إحصاء عن استخدام ("الانترنت: 29% للبريد الإلكتروني و 19% للاتصال بالآخرين، و 3% لإضاعة الوقت"), Beirut: *Annahar Newspaper*, 19 October, Issue number 20786, p. 6

Annahar Newspaper, 2004. 'The Internet in the Arab World between the Obstacles and Lucks (الانترنت في العالم العربي بين العوائق والحظوظ)', Beirut: *Annahar Newspaper*, September 5, Issue number 22069, p. 16

Annahar Newspaper, 2005. 'Clarification from the Ministry of Telecommunication on the issue of Censoring the Internet from Abroad' (توضيح من (الاتصالات حول تعرض الانترنت الى الرقابة من الخارج), Beirut: *Annahar Newspaper*, 28 May, Issue number 22317, p. 16

Annahar Newspaper, 2007. 'Statistics of the International Union for Communication: Lebanon is Ranked Fifth in the Number of Internet Users in the Arab World', (إحصاءات الاتحاد الدولي للاتصالات: لبنان خامساً في الانترنت العربي), Beirut, *Annahar Newspaper*, 21 August, Issue number 23097, p. 15

Annahar Newspaper, 2008, 'Lebanon Overtakes Saudi Arabia and Morocco in the Number of Internet Users', (لبنان يتفوق على السعودية والمغرب في عدد مستخدمي الانترنت), Beirut: *Annahar Newspaper*, 6 May, Issue number 23341, p.14

Annahar Archive, 2011. 'Annahar Research and Documentation Center', 21 September, available at: <http://www.annahar.com/archive.php> [retrieved 21 September 2011]

ANPA Convention. 1981. 'Publishers to discuss new video technology', *Editor & Publisher*, 2 (15), p. 38

Antelava, N. 2009. 'Armenians jump Lebanon's divide', *BBC News*, 16 April, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8000507.stm [retrieved 24 July 2014]

Arab Media Outlook 2009-2013, 2010, 'Inspiring Local Content forecasts and analysis of traditional and Digital Media in the Arab World', Dubai: Dubai Press Club, available at: <http://fas.org/irp/eprint/arabmedia.pdf> [retrieved 27 July 2014]

Ariola, M. 2006. *Principles and Methods of Research*, Manila: Rex Book Store, Inc.

Ashmore, M. R.; Woofit, R.; and Harding, S. 1994. 'Humans and others, agents and things', *American Behavioral Scientist*, (37), pp.733-740

Aspray, W. and Ceruzzi P. E. (Eds), 2008. 'Internet Challenges for Media Businesses', London: *The Internet and American Business*, The MIT Press

AUB Bulletin Today Online. 2003. 'Tueni Lectures on the Iraq War and the Arab World', *AUB Bulletin Today*, June, 4 (6), available at: <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webbultn/v4n6/06.html> [retrieved 13 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2005. 'The wickedness of those who are attacking Syria' (حقارة البعض الذين يهاجمون سورية...), *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 16 May, available at: <http://www.mshtawy.com/vb/showthread.php?t=961&page=1> [retrieved 5 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2007. 'After 19 Years...' (بعد 19 سنة...), *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 28 March, available at: <http://ldparty.org/index.php?id=371> [retrieved 5 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2009. 'Syria is interfering in Lebanon's Elections', *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 23 April, available at: <http://www.beirutonline.net/portal/article.php?id=4402> [retrieved 7 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2009. 'Michel Aoun, the great thief who is cheating people and accusing them of banditry' (ميشال عون اللص الكبير يغشّ الناس ويّتهم غيره بالصوصية), *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 11 May, available at: <http://www.saowt.com/forum/showthread.php?t=35779&page=1> [retrieved 11 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2009. 'Charles Ayoub is the Thief' (ان شارل أيوب هو لص), *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 12 May, available at: <http://web.saidanet.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=12182> [retrieved 11 March 2011]

Ayoub, C. 2012. 'Who Governs Lebanon? Security officials or State or justice officials? A security source threatens revenge and says let he who has ears to listen.', *Aldiyarnewspaper*, 3 November, available at: <http://diyar.charlesayoub.com/> [retrieved 12 March 2011]

Azi Abid, E. R. 2003. 'The Culture and the Necessity of Communication: An Evaluative Approach' (الثقافة و حتمية الاتصال: نظرة قيمية), in *The Arab Future Magazine*, (مجلة المستقبل العربي), Issue number 29, Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies

- Bassam, L. and Dziadosz, A. 2014. 'Lebanon to Drop Price of Internet: Minister', *Al Arabiya News*, 14 April, available at: <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/business/telecoms/2014/04/14/Lebanon-to-drop-net-price-after-cutting-phone-rates-minister.html>, [retrieved 31 July 2014]
- Baasiri, S. 2008. 'Is it the end of the ink and printed newspapers?' (أهي نهاية صحف), *Annahar Newspaper*, 14 December, Beirut, Issue number 23558
- Badr, M. 1998. 'The Information Security' (أمن المعلومات), *The Magazine of Computer, Communication and Technology*, (مجلة الكمبيوتر والاتصالات والالكترونيات), Tunisia, p. 64
- Badran, D. 2013. 'Democracy and Rhetoric in the Arab World', *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, 4(1), pp. 65–86
- Baird, R. et al. 1987. 'The Graphics of Communication', (5th edition), New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- Barber, G. 2009. 'Content Comes Before Good Design', *Sitepoint Website*, 13 January, available at: <http://www.sitepoint.com/content-comes-before-good-design/>, [retrieved 11 November 2011]
- Barthes, R. 1977. 'The Rhetoric of the Image', In *Image, Music, Text*, translated by Stephen Heath, New York: Hill and Wang, pp. 38-39, available at: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/rogerbb/classes/berlin/barthes.pdf> [retrieved 15 July 2014]
- Baydoun, R. 1999. 'The Beginning was at AUB in 1993, Internet in Lebanon: 40 Thousand Subscribers and 17 Companies' 1993م، البداية كانت في الجامعة الأميركية عام 1993، الانترنت في لبنان: 40 ألف مشترك و17 شركة توفر الخدمة، *Annahar Newspaper*, 8 February, Issue number 20269, Beirut, p. 11
- Beam, B.A. 1990. 'Journalism professionalism as an organizational-level concept', *Journalism Monographs 121*, Columbia, S.C.: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
- Beamish, R. 1998. 'The local newspaper in the age of multimedia', in B. Franklin and D. Murphy (eds), *Making Local News: Local Journalism in context*, London: Routledge, pp. 140-153
- Beck, A.; Bennet, P.; and Wall, P. 2002. 'AS communication studies: the essential introduction', New York: Routledge
- Belam, M. 2007. 'Newspapers 2.0: How Web 2.0 are British Newspaper Websites?', available at: http://www.currybet.net/cbet_blog/2007/05/newspapers-20-how-web-20-are-b.php [retrieved 12 June 2014]

- Bentz, V. M. and Shapiro, J. J. 1998. 'Mindful inquiry in social research', Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications
- Berger, J. 1972. 'Ways of Seeing', London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books Ltd
- Berger, A. 1998. 'Media Research Techniques', (2nd edition), London: Sage Publications
- Berry, D. L. 1999. 'Comprehension and Recall of the Internet News: A Quantitative Study of Web Page Design', paper presented at the annual meeting of *AEJMC*: New Orleans, Los Angeles
- Bignell, J. 1997. 'Media Semiotics: An Introduction', Manchester: Manchester Press
- Bilbao-Osorio, B.; Dutta, S.; and Lanvin, B. 2013. 'The Global Information Technology Report 2013: Growth and Jobs in a Hyper-connected World', World Economic Forum: Geneva, p. 2013
- Biocca, F. 1997. 'Cyborg's Dilemma: Progressive Embodiment in Virtual Environments', *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, September, available at: <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc> [retrieved 29 May 2014]]
- Blomberg, J.; Giacomini, J.; Mosher, A.; and Swenton-Wall, P. 1993. 'Ethnographic Field Methods and Their Relations to Design', in *Anticipatory design: Principles and Practices*, Douglas Schuler and Aki Namioka (eds), New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.
- Boczkowski, P. 1998. 'Astonishing Growth', in Editor & Publisher, 16 May, p. 34
- Boczkowski, P. 2000. 'Distribute and Conquer?: Changing in Regimes of Information Creation in Online Newspaper', Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, June, Acapulco: Mexico
- Boczkowski, P. 2004. 'Digitizing the News, Innovation in Online Newspapers', London: The MIT Press
- Boczkowski, P. 2004. 'The Mutual Shaping of Technology and Society in Videotex Newspapers: Beyond the Diffusion and Social Shaping Perspectives', in *The Information Society*, 20 (4), pp. 255 – 267
- Boczkowski, P. 2009. 'Rethinking Hard and Soft News Production: From Common Ground to Divergent Paths', *Journal of Communication*, 59(1), pp. 98–116

- Bokesoy, D. 2008. 'E-newspapers: Revolution or Evolution?', *Scroll Magazine: Design of Electronic Text*, FIS2309, 1(1), available at: <http://fdt.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/fdt/article/view/4902> [retrieved 15 May 2009]
- Boulos, J. C. 2007. 'Television a Trip to the Hell' (التلفزيون رحلة الى الجحيم), Beirut: Dar Annahar for Publication
- Boyd, D. 1993. 'Broadcasting in the Arab world: a survey of the electronic media in the Middle East', Iowa State University: Iowa
- Boyd, D.; Al-Makaty, S.; and Tubergan, G. N. 1994. 'Source Credibility During the Gulf War: A Q-Study of Rural and Urban Saudi Arabian Citizens', *Journalism Quarterly*, 71 (1), pp. 55-63
- Boyd, D. and Ellison, N. 2008. 'Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 (1), pp. 210-230
- Boylan, J. 2000. 'The Critics: A Thousand voices bloom', *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April, available at: <http://www.cjr.org/year/00/2/voices.asp> [retrieved 29 November 2009]
- Branscomb, A. 1988. 'Videotex: Global progress and comparative Politics', *Journal of Communication* (38), pp. 50-59
- Brewer, D. 2009. 'Annahar launches web TV', *Media Helping Media: Free training resources and support*, 25 February, available at: <http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/news/69-middle-east/356-an-nahar-launches-web-tv> [retrieved 28 July 2011]
- Brewer, J. and Hunter, A. 1989. 'Multi-method research: A synthesis of styles', London: Sage Publications
- Briggs, A. and Bruke, P. 2002. 'A Social History Of The Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet', Cambridge: Polity
- Brock, G. 2013. 'Out of Print: Newspapers, Journalism and the Business of News in the Digital Age', London: Kogan Page Limited
- Bromley, M. 1997. 'The End of Journalism? Changes in Workplace Practices in the Press and Broadcasting in the 1990s', In M. Bromley and T. O'Malley (Eds) *A Journalism Reader*, London: Routledge, pp. 330-50
- Brown, M. 2000. 'Bringing People Closer to the News', *Brandweek*, 41 (38), p. 26
- Bruns, A. 2003. 'Gatewatching, not gatekeeping: Collaborative online news', *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy: quarterly journal of media research and resources*, 107, pp. 31-44

- Bryman, A. 1988. 'Quantity and Quality in Social Research', London: Unwin Hyman
- Bryant, J. and Thompson S. 2002. 'Fundamentals of media effects', Boston: McGraw Hill
- Bucy, E. 2004. 'Second generation Net news: Interactivity and information accessibility in the online environment', *International Journal on Media Management*, 6 (1-2), pp. 102-113
- Bucy, E. 2004. 'Interactivity in society: Locating an elusive concept', *The Information Society*, 20 (5), p. 373
- Bukhalid, N. 1994. 'Internet Challenges and Future Plans', January, AUB: Beirut, available at: <http://www.aub.edu.lb/services/computer-center/pcns/ncp3.html> [retrieved 19 April 2009]
- Bukhalid, N. 1994. 'The Lebanese Academic and Research Network', AUB: Beirut, August, available at: <http://www.aub.edu.lb/services/computer-center/pcns/ncp4.html> [retrieved 19 April 2009]
- Bukhalid, N. 1998. 'Web Presence and Beyond', AUB web, Beirut, available at: <http://www.aub.edu.lb/cns/policy/98-AUBweb.pdf> [retrieved 20 April 2009]
- Bunn, A. 2001. 'Human Portals', in *Brill's Content*, May, available at: http://www.brillscontent.com/2001may/features/web_portals.shtml [retrieved 15 June 2009]
- Bunz, M. 2009. 'Rupert Murdoch: There's no such thing as a free news story' News Corp chief Rupert Murdoch tells US regulators that users will pay for news – and aggregation is theft Huffington hits out at Murdoch speech', *The Guardian Newspaper*, 1 December, available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/dec/01/rupert-murdoch-no-free-news> [retrieved 7 November 2011]
- Burgin, V. 1982. 'Introduction', in Burgin V. (ed.) *Thinking Photography*, London: Macmillan Press LTD, pp.1-15
- Burns, R. 2000. 'Introduction to Research Methods', London: Sage Publications
- Campbell, J. and Thomas, H. 1981. 'The videotex marketplace—A theory of evolution', *Telecommunications Policy*, (5), pp. 111-120
- Cann, D. J. and Moher, P. B. 2001. 'Journalism and source and source gender in Australian television news', *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 45(1), pp. 162-174

- Cao, Z. and Li, X. 2006. 'Effect of growing Internet newspapers on circulation of U.S. print newspapers', In X. Li (ed.) *Internet newspapers: The making of a mainstream medium*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 121-138
- Carey, J. 1975. 'A Cultural Approach to Communication', *Communication*, (2), p.122
- Carey, J. and Elton, C.J. M. 2009. 'The other path to the web: the forgotten role of videotex and other early online services', *New Media Society*, (11), pp. 241 – 260
- Carlson, D. 2003. 'The History of Online Journalism', In Kawamoto Kevin (ed.) *Digital Journalism: Emerging Media and the Changing Horizons of Journalism*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
- Carter, P. 2000, 'A Semiotic Analysis of Newspaper Front-Page Photographs', April, Aberystwyth University: UK, available at: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/pmc9601.html> [retrieved 22 July 2010]
- Case, D.1994. 'The Social Shaping of Videotex: How Information Services for the Public have Evolved', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, (45), pp. 483-497
- Castells, M. 2001. 'The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society', Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Chalmers, A. 1982. 'What is this thing called science?', Milton Keynes: Open University Press
- Champress. 2009. 'May God Curse you Gambler Charles Ayoub', لعن الله القمار يا (شارل ايوب), 21 April, available at: www.champress.net [retrieved 15 December 2011]
- Chandler, P. and Sweller, J. 1992. 'The split-attention effect as a factor in the design of instruction', in *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 62, pp. 233-246
- Chan-Olmsted, S. and Louisa H. 2003. 'Internet Business Models for Broadcasters: How Television Stations Perceive and Integrate the Internet', in *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 47(4), pp. 597-617
- Chui, M.; Manyika, J.; Bughin, J.; Dobbs, R.; Roxburgh, C.; Sarrazin, H.; Sands, G.; and Westergren, M. 2012. *The Social Economy: Unlocking Value and Productivity through Social Technologies*, McKinsey Global Institute: McKinsey & Company
- Chung, D. S. 2008. 'Interactive features of online newspapers: Identifying patterns and predicting use of engaged readers', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(3), pp. 658-679

- Chyi, I. H. 2004. 'Who Would Pay for Online News? An Empirical Study on the Viability of the Subscription Model', 12-15 May, *The 6th World Media Economics Conference*, Centre d'études sur les médias and Journal of Media Economics HEC Montréal: Canada
- Chyi, I. H. and Sylvie, G. 2000. 'Online Newspapers in the U.S.: Perceptions of Markets, Products, Revenue, and Competition', *International Journal on Media Management* 2, (2), pp. 69–77
- Chyi, I. H. and Sylvie, G. 2001. 'The Medium is Global, the Content is Not: The Role of Geography in Online Newspaper Markets', *Journal of Media Economics*, 14 (4), pp. 231-248
- Chyi, I. H. and Lasorsa, D. L. 2002. 'An Explorative Study on the Market Relation Between Online and Print Newspapers', *Journal of Media Economics*, 15 (2), pp. 91-106
- CIA World Factbook. 2012. 'CIA World Factbook: Lebanon: Refugees and internally displaced persons', CIA World Factbook, 10 September, available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html> [retrieved 30 July 2014]
- Cochrane, P. 2007. 'Saudi Arabia's Media Influence', *Arab Media and Society*, Fall, (3), available at: <http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=421> [retrieved 7 July 2014]
- Cochrane, P. 2008. 'Lebanon's Media Battle', *Arab Media and Society*, Fall, (6), available at: <http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=426> [retrieved 7 July 2014]
- Cohen, E. L. 2002. 'Online Journalism as Market-Driven Journalism', *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 46(4), pp. 532–48
- Computer History Museum. 2006. 'Internet History', available at: http://www.computerhistory.org/Internet_history/ [retrieved 19 February 2012]
- Conboy, M. and Steel, J. 2008. 'The Future of Newspapers', *Journalism Studies* 9(5), pp. 650–61
- Creswell, J. 2009. 'Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches', California: Sage Publications
- Crosbie, V. 2004. 'What Newspapers and Their Websites Must Do to Survive', *Journalism Review*, 4 March, available at: <http://www.ojr.org> [retrieved 27 September 2011]
- Cottle, S. and Ashton, M. 1999. 'From BBC Newsroom to BBC News Centre: On changing technology and journalist practices', in *Convergence*, 5(3), pp. 22-43

- Dabbous, Y. and Hamdan, A. 2006. 'The Hunted', *IPI Global Journalist*, 1 January, available at: www.globaljournalist.org/stories/2006/01/01/the-hunted [retrieved 30 July 2014]
- Dabbous-Sensenig, D. 2007. 'Country Report: Media in Lebanon', *Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity (ACRLI)*, May, Lebanese American University: Beirut
- Dahlgren, P. 1996. 'Media logic in cyberspace: Repositioning journalism and its publics', *Javnost / The Public*, 3(3), pp. 59-72
- The Daily Star*. 2004. 'MF: Lebanon's debt alarming', *The Daily Star newspaper*, 20 May, available at: <http://www.cggl.org/scripts/new.asp?id=227> [retrieved 25 July 2014]
- The Daily Star*. 2011. 'In beat with the times, An-Nahar gets a facelift and fresh new start', *The Daily Star newspaper*, 13 April, available at: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/ErrorPage.aspx?aspxerrorpath=/Apr/13/default.aspx#ixzz1RwpqmzCS> [retrieved 10 July 2011]
- The Daily Star*. 2011. 'Beirut ranked 4th most expensive Middle East city', *The Daily Star newspaper*, 18 July, available at: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Business/Lebanon/2011/Jul-18/Beirut-ranked-4th-most-expensive-Mideast-city.ashx#ixzz1mI63zZ9E> [retrieved 13 February 2012]
- The Daily Star*. 2014. 'Bassil Promises to ease Citizenship for expatriates', *The Daily Star newspaper*, 1 May, available at: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/May-01/255048-bassil-promises-to-ease-citizenship-for-expatriates.ashx#axzz30yVHukzf> [retrieved 12 July 2014]
- The Daily Star*. 2014. 'Unlimited Internet Plan Coming to Lebanon', *The Daily Star newspaper*, 23 May, available at: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/May-23/257540-unlimited-Internet-plan-coming-to-lebanon.ashx#axzz38z1uFPAA> [retrieved 30 July 2014]
- Dajani, N. 1971. 'The Press in Lebanon', *International Communication Gazette*, (17), London: Sage Publication, p.152
- Dajani, N. 1992. 'Disoriented Media in a Fragmented Society: The Lebanese Experience', American University of Beirut: Lebanon
- Dajani, N. 2001. 'The Changing Scene of Lebanese Television', *Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, Fall–Winter, (7)
- Dajani, N. 2013. 'The Myth of Media Freedom in Lebanon', *Arab Media and Society*, Summer (18)

- Darwish, A. 2009. *Social Semiotics of Arabic Satellite Television: Beyond the Glamour*, Australia: Writescope Pty Ltd
- Davalos, J. 2013. 'Three Ways Social Media Can Save the Newspaper Industry, Culture and Lifestyle' in *Social Media Week*, 7 August, available at: <http://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2013/08/ways-social-media-is-saving-the-newspaper-industry/> [retrieved 11 June 2014]
- Day, G. S. and Schoemaker, P.J.H. 2000. 'Scenario Planning for Disruptive Technologies', in *Wharton on Managing Emerging Technologies*, (G. S. Day, P. J. H. Schoemaker, and R. E. Gunther, eds) New York: Wiley
- DeFleur, M. and Ball-Rokeach, S. 1989. 'Theories of Mass Communication' (5th edition, New York & London: Longman
- DeFleur, M.; Davenport, L.; Cronin, M.; and DeFleur, M. 1992. *Audience Recall of News Stories Presented by Newspaper, Computer, Television and Radio*, *Journalism Quarterly*, (69), pp. 1010-1022
- DeFleur, M. and Dennis, E. 2002. *Understanding Mass Communication: A Liberal Arts Perspective*, (7th edition), New York: Houghton Mifflin Company
- DeFluer, M. and DeFleur, E. 2010. *Understanding Media in the Digital Age*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon
- Dennis, E. E. 2006. 'Television's Convergence Conundrum: Finding the Right Digital Strategy', in *Television Quarterly* 37(1), pp. 22–6
- Derk, J. 1999. 'A Plea for New Thinking: Let's Think of Ourselves as Web Sites, Not Online Newspapers', July, available at: www.mediainfo.com [retrieved 11 May 2009]
- Deuze, M. 1999. 'Journalism and the Net: Thinking about Global Standards', available at: <http://home.pscw.uva.nl/deuze/pub15.htm> [retrieved 7 April 2014]
- Deuze, M. 2001. 'Online Journalism: Modelling the First Generation of News Types of News media Online', in *First Monday*, 6(10), available at: http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_10/deuze/index.html [retrieved 11 December 2010]
- Deuze, M. 2003. 'The Web and its Journalisms: Considering the Consequences of Different', in *New Media and Society*, 5(2), pp. 203-230
- Deuze, M. 2004. 'What is Multimedia Journalism?', in *Journalism Studies* 5(2), pp. 139–52
- Deuze, M. 2007. *Media Work*, Cambridge: Polity, p.153

- Devyatkin, C. 2001. 'Online journalism: Digital video stars', in *Content Wire*, 21 May, available at: <http://www.content-wire.com/Home/Index.cfm?ccs=86&cs=316> [retrieved 4 May 2010]
- De Waal, E.; Schönbach, K.; and Lauf, E. 2005. 'Online newspapers: A substitute or complement for print newspapers and other information channels?', in *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*, (30), pp. 45-72
- Dibean, W. and Garrison, B. 2001. 'Online newspaper market size and use of World Wide Web technologies', paper presented at the Media in Transition Conference at MIT, 8 October 1999, available at: http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/papers/Dibean_Garrison.html [retrieved 21 November 2011]
- Dickinson, A. 2007. 'Video Workload Survey Results', in *Andy Dickinson Blog*, 3 November, available at: <http://digidickinson.net/2007/11/03/video-workload-survey-results/> [retrieved 10 June 2014]
- Dillon, L. G. 1999. *Art and the Semiotics of Images: Three Questions about Visual Meaning*, University of Washington: Washington, July, available at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/dillon/rhethtml/signifiers/sigsave.html#wordimage> [retrieved 3 June 2014]
- Dobosz, D. 2003. 'The Repertory Grid Interview and laddering as Complementary Instruments for Organizational Culture Analysis Based on the Ethnographic Approach', in *Psychological Constructivism and the Social World* (Gabriele Chiari and Maria Laura Nuzzo, eds) Milano: Italy: Franco Angeli s.r.l.
- Domingo, D. 2008a. 'Interactivity in the Daily Routines of Online Newsrooms: Dealing with an Uncomfortable Myth', in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(3), pp. 680-704
- Domingom, D. and Heinone, A. 2008. 'Weblogs and Journalism: A Typology to Explore the Blurring Boundaries', *Nordicom Review*, 29 (1), pp. 3-15
- Dominick, J. 2009. *The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age*, (10th edition), New York: McGraw-Hill
- Dotinga, R. 1999. 'The Great Pretenders', July, available at: www.mediainfo.com [retrieved 10 April 2008]
- Downs, G. W. Jr and Mohr, L. 1976. 'Conceptual Issues in the Study of Innovation', in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(4), pp. 700-714
- Doyle, P. 2012. *Lebanon*, Connecticut, USA: The Globe Pequot Press
- Dreier, T. 2011. 'Five Lessons Newspapers Have Learned about Online Video', in *Online Video*, 5 December, available at: <http://www.onlinevideo.net/2011/12/five->

[lessons-newspapers-have-learned-about-online-video/#ixzz31FPna4lj](#) [retrieved 28 April 2014]

Duncan, J. 2007. 'If the revolution will not be televised, will it be in the newspaper? What CBS and cable tell us about newspapers on the Internet', in *InkSniffer*, 10 June available at: <http://blog.inksniffer.com> [retrieved 15 April 2009]

Duncan, J. 2009. 'Newspapers and the Internet: Web metrics and the false impression of the power of online', in *InkSniffer*, 10 March, available at: <http://blog.inksniffer.com/> [retrieved 15 April 2009]

Dupagne, M. and Garrison, B. 2006. 'The Meaning and Influence of Convergence', in *Journalism Studies*, 7(2), pp. 237–255

The Economist. 2012. 'The Online Ummah', in *Islam and Technology*, 18 August, available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/21560541> [retrieved 19 August 2014]

Eindary, P. 2008. 'The Mountain: An unmerciful Truth' (الجبلة حقيقة لا ترحم), Beirut: Paul Eindary Publisher

Elnashra. 2011. 'The Arab Users of Facebook increased by 50% and Lebanon among the first five countries', (عدد مستخدمي الفيسبوك العرب يرتفع 50%...ولبنان بين اول 5 دول), 19 September, available at: <http://www.elnashra.com/news/show/386720/-عدد-مستخدمي-الفيسبوك-العرب-يرتفع-ولبنان-بين-اول-دول> [retrieved 19 September 2011]

Endres, K. 1998. 'Zine but not Heard? Editors talk about publishing online', paper presented at the *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication* annual conference, August, Baltimore, Maryland

Erdelez, S. and Rioux, K. 2000. 'Sharing tools on newspaper Websites: an exploratory Study', in *Online Information Review*, 24(3), pp. 218-228

Eugenia, M. and Boczkowski, P. J. 2009. 'Between tradition and change: A review of recent research on online news production', in *Journalism*, 10 (5), pp.562-586

European Journalism Center. 2010. 'Media Landscape: Lebanon', 8 November, available at: http://www.ejc.net/media_landscape/article/lebanon/ [retrieved 5 March 2011]

Everette, E. D. and Ash, J. 2001. 'Toward a Taxonomy of New Media: Management Views of an Evolving Industry', in *International Journal on Media Management*, 3(4), pp. 26-32

Fawaz, M. 2013. 'The Role of The Media in a Precarious Plural Democracy: The Case of Lebanon', in *Communication Dissertations*, Department of Communication, Georgia State University: Georgia, USA

- Fishman, M. 1980. *Manufacturing the news*, University of Texas Press: Austin
- Fisk, R. 2009. 'End of an era for Lebanon's free press: Once a bastion of journalistic independence, Beirut's newspapers are losing their edge', in *The Independent newspaper*, 22 October, available at:
<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/fisk/robert-fisk-end-of-an-era-for-lebanons-free-press-1806896.html> [retrieved 22 March 2011]
- Fitzgerald, M. 1997. 'Newspapers Go It Alone in Cyberspace', in *Editor and Publisher*, 22 February, pp. 7-8
- Fletcher, A. L. 2003. 'The crisis of communication: videotex, the Internet and innovation in France and the United States', *Prometheus*, 21 (3), pp.303-315
- Flick, U. 2006. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications
- Flinders, K. 2012. 'Social media users demand more meaningful interactivity', in *Computer Weekly*, 21 February, available at:
<http://www.computerweekly.com/news/2240118007/Social-media-users-demand-more> [retrieved 12 June 2014]
- Folayan, O. 2004. 'Interactivity in Online Journalism: A case study of the Interactive Nature of Nigeria's online Guardian', in thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master's degree in Art, Journalism and Media Studies, University in Grahamstown, South Africa: Rhodes University
- Foo, Y. P.; Naphtali, I. T.; and Hao, X. 1999. 'Trends in online newspapers: A look at the U.S. Web', in *Newspaper Research Journal*, 20 (2), pp. 52-63
- Frankel, M. 1995. 'The Daily Digital', *The New York Times Magazine*, April, Issue number 9, p.38
- Freedom House. 2011. 'License to Censor: The use of media regulation to restrict press freedom – Lebanon', 20 October, available at:
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/4eccefc521.html> [retrieved 28 July 2014]
- Freedom House. 2013. 'Freedom of the Press: Lebanon', available at:
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2013/lebanon#.U9g0v-OSw2Y> [retrieved 30 July 2014]
- Galey, P. 2009. 'Lebanon Illiteracy Report shows Alarming Urban-Rural Divide', *Daily Star Newspaper*, 4 July, available at:
<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2009/Jul-04/57377-lebanon-illiteracy-report-shows-alarming-urban-rural-divide.ashx#axzz38z1uFPAA> [retrieved 31 July 2014]

- Gale, S. 1990. 'Human Aspects of Interactive Multimedia Communication', in *Interacting with Computers 2*, August, pp. 175-189
- García, E. P. 2008. 'Print and Online Newsrooms in Argentinean Media: Autonomy and Professional Identity', in *Making Online News: The Ethnography of New Media Production*, (C. A. Paterson and D. Domingo, eds), New York: Peter Lang, pp. 61–75
- Garcia media. 2011. 'Annahar (Lebanon), Hindustan (India) premiere new looks today', in *The Mario Bolg*, 12 April, available at: http://garciamedia.com/blog/articles/an_nahar_lebanon_hindustan_india_premiere_new_looks_today [retrieved 10 July 2011]
- Garrison, B. 2001. 'Diffusion of Online Information Technologies in Newspaper Newsrooms', in *Journalism*, 2(2), pp. 221–39
- Gates, B. 1996. *The Road Ahead*, New York: Penguin
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books
- Geertz, C. 1988. 'Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author', Cambridge: Polity Press
- Gentzkow, M. 2007. 'Valuing New Goods in a Model with Complementarity: Online Newspapers', *The American Economic Review*, June, pp. 713-744
- Ghazi, A. 1997. 'Lebanon's Economy', available at: <http://www.ghazi.de/economy.html> [retrieved 25 July 2014]
- Giddens, A. 1974. *Positivism and Sociology*, London: Heinemann, pp. 1-22
- Gilder, G. F. 1994. 'Fidler's Electronic News Panel is a better bet for the future than home shopping', in *ASNE Bulletin*
- Gilbert, C. G. 2005. 'Unbundling the Structure of Inertia: Resource versus Routine Rigidity', in *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(5), pp. 741–63
- Glass, C. 2007. 'The lord of no man's land: A guided tour through Lebanon's ceaseless war', in *Harper's Magazine*, 1 March, available at: http://www.charlesglass.net/archives/2007/03/the_lord_of_no.html [retrieved 7 July 2014]
- Goldstein, E. 2003. 'The Internet in the Middle East and North Africa: A Cautious Start', in *Democracy and Governance*, 13 October, available at: <http://www.cominit.com/en/node/3868/348> [retrieved 3 May 2010]
- Goldstein, E.; Megally, H.; PoKempner, D.; and McCintock, M. 1999. 'The Internet in the Middle East and North Africa: Free Expression and Censorship', 1 July, New York: Human Rights Watch

- Goodman, H. 2001. 'In-Depth Interviews', in *The Handbook of Social Work Research Method*, (Bruce A. Thyer, ed.) California: Sage Publications
- Gopal, Y. 1996. 'Selling in Cyberspace: An investigation of Modality Effects on Cognitive Processing of Persuasive Communications on the Internet', A Ph.D. dissertation presented to the University of Georgia: Georgia, USA
- Gonzalez-Quijano, Y. 2003. *The Birth of a Media Ecosystem: Lebanon in the Internet Age, In New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, (D. E Eickelman and J. W. Anderson, eds) Indiana University Press: Bloomington
- Grabowicz, P. 2014. 'The Transition to Digital Journalism', 30 March, available at: <http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/digital-transform/comments-on-news-stories/> [retrieved 11 April 2014]
- Grazian, D. 2005. 'A digital revolution? A reassessment of new media and cultural production in the digital age', in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (597), pp. 209-222
- Graziplene, L. R. 2000. *Teletext: Its promise and demise*, Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated Presses, Inc.
- Green, C. 2011. 'How are Newspapers adapting to the Internet?', in *Fiddle Head Focus*, 1 June, available at: <http://fiddleheadfocus.com/story/how-are-newspapers-adapting-Internet> [retrieved 11 September 2014]
- Green, E. 2008. 'Blurry Line Separates Politics, Journalism: "Revolving door" spins experienced politicians between professions', in *America.gov* Website, 24 June, available at: <http://www.america.gov/st/democracyhr-english/2008/June/200806241741291xeneerg0.7010767.html> [retrieved 6 March 2011]
- Greer, J. D. and Yan, Y. 2010. 'New Ways of Connecting with Readers: how community newspapers are using Facebook, Twitter and other tools to deliver the news', in paper presented at Kansas State University on 125th annual meeting of the national Newspaper Association, available at: <http://www.nnaweb.org/acts/2010/documents/handouts/gree01.pdf> [retrieved 11 June 2014]
- Grills, S. 1998b. 'An Invitation to the Field: Fieldwork and the Pragmatists' Lesson', in *Doing Ethnographic Research: Fieldwork Settings*, (ed. S. Grills) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 3-18
- Guay, T. 1995. 'Web publishing paradigms', in *Information Technology Project Group* paper, available at: <http://hoshi.cic.sfu.ca/~guay/Paradigm/Paradigm.html> [retrieved 5 December 2009]
- Gunter, B. 2003. *News and the Net*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associated Publishers Inc.

- Ha, L. and James, E. L. 1998. 'Interactivity Re-examined: A Baseline Analysis of Early Business Web sites', in *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 42 (4), pp. 457-474.
- Haas, T. 2005. 'From "Public Journalism" to the "Public's Journalism"? Rhetoric and Reality in the Discourse on Weblogs', in *Journalism Studies*. 6(3), pp. 387-96
- Hall, J. 2001. *Online Journalism: A Critical Primer*, London: Pluto Press
- Hallman, T. 2005. 'No matter what your beat is, be an embedded reporter', in *Quill*, 93(4), p.40
- Hammersley, M. 1992. *What's wrong with ethnography?: methodological explorations*, London: Routledge
- Hamzah, W. 2009. 'Political Success in Lebanon Runs in the Family', in *M&C News*, Middle East Features, 2 June, available at: www.monstersandcritics.com [retrieved 28 February 2011]
- Hansen, A.; Cottle, S.; Negrine, R. and Newbold, C. 1998. 'Mass Communication Research Methods', Hampshire and London: Macmillan Press
- Harb, Z. 2011. *Channels of Resistance in Lebanon: Liberation Propaganda, Hezbollah and the Media*, London: I.B.Tauris
- Hardy, R. 2007. 'The Lebanese Crisis Explained', in *The BBC News*, 22 May, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6173322.stm [retrieved 23 July 2014]
- Harford, T. 2007. 'Why You Didn't Pay To Read This. Should newspaper Web sites really be free?', in *Slate Magazine*, 27 October, available at: http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/the_undercover_economist/2007/10/why_you_d_idnt_pay_to_read_this.html [retrieved 10 November 2011]
- Harris, W. 2006. *The new face of Lebanon: History's Revenge*, New Jersey: Markus Wiener Publishers
- Harvey, L. and Myers, M. D. 1995. 'Scholarship and Practice: The Contribution of Ethnographic Research Methods to Bridging the Gap', in *Information Technology & People*, (8) 3, pp. 13-27
- Hawi, G. 2004. 'George Hawi remembers the war, resistance, and the party dialogues with Ghassan Charbel', جورج حاوي يتذكر الحرب والمقاومة والحزب حوارات مع غسان شربل, Beirut: Annahar Publishing and Printing House, p.85
- He, Z. and Zhu, J.-H. 2002. 'The Ecology of Online Newspapers: The Case of China', in *Media, Culture & Society*, 24(1), pp. 121-37

Heeter, C. 1989. 'Implications of New Interactive Technologies for Conceptualizing Communication', in *Media use in the information age*, (J. L. Salvaggio and J. Bryant, eds) New Jersey: Hillsdale, Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 217-235

Henderson, B. and Fernback, J. 1998. 'The campus press; A practical approach to on-line newspapers', in *The Electronic Grapevine: Rumor, reputation, and Reporting in the New On-Line Environment*, (D. I. Borden & K. Harvey, eds) Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum associates, pp. 113- 121

Hendricks, D. 2013. 'Complete History of Social Media', in *Small Business Trends*, May 8, available at: <http://smallbiztrends.com/2013/05/the-complete-history-of-social-media-infographic.html> [retrieved 30 March 2015]

Herald Newspaper. 2010. 'How the Newspaper World is Changing', 20 September, available at: <http://www.heraldnewspaper.org/how-the-newspaper-world-is-changing.html> [retrieved 30 May 2011]

Herbert, J. 1998. 'Working towards a practical theory of journalism', in *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, July-December, Issue No. 5, available at: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/apme/vol1/iss5/12> [retrieved 18 January 2012], pp.137-143

Hersh, J. 2009. 'Lebanon and Syria: Nayla Tueni's Burden', in *The Faster Times Online Magazine*, 20 May, available at: <http://thefastertimes.com/lebanonandsyria/2009/05/20/nayla-tuenis-burden/> [retrieved 9 March 2011]

Heslop, A. 2011. 'The irresolvable dilemma of the newspaper publisher', in *World Association of Newspapers*, 7 July, available at: <http://www.wan-iffra.org/articles/2011/07/07/the-irresolvable-dilemma-of-the-newspaper-publisher> [retrieved 16 October 2014]

Heyl, B. S. 2001. 'Ethnographic Interviewing', in *Handbook of Ethnography* (Atkinson, P.; Coffey, A.; Delamont, S.; Lofland, J.; and Lofland, L., eds) London: Sage Publications

Hill, C. W. L. and Rothaermel, F. T. 2003. 'The performance of incumbent firms in the face of radical technological innovation', in *Academy of Management Review*, Volume 28, pp. 257-274

Hirst, D. 2010. *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East*, New York: Nation Books

Hoey, B. 2009. 'What is Ethnography?', 10 December, available at: http://www.brianhoey.com/General%20Site/general_defn-ethnography.htm [retrieved 11 July 2010]

Holloway, T. D. 2009. 'The Relationship between Print and Electronic Newspapers in Thailand in 2000 in terms of Production, Process and News

Contents', in thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leicester, UK

Holsti, O. 1969. *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, UK: Addison-Wesley Publication

Hong, S. 2012. 'Online news on Twitter: Newspaper's social media adoption and their online readership', in *Information Economics and Policy*, 24(1), pp. 69-74

Hoogeveen, M. 1997. 'Towards a theory of the Effectiveness of Multimedia Systems', in *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 9(2), pp.151-168

Hooker, M. 1994. *Interview Come the millennium: Interviews on the shape of our future*, Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel

Hope, B. and Li, Z. 2004. 'Online newspapers: the impact of culture, sex, and age on the perceived importance of specified quality factors', in *Information Research*, 9(4), paper 197, available at: <http://InformationR.net/ir/9-4/paper197.html> [retrieved 6 January 2011]

Horrigan, J. 2006. 'Online News: For Many Home Broadband Users, the Internet Is a Primary News Source', in *Pew Internet and American Life Project*, 22 March, available at: http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/178/report_display.asp [retrieved 25 May 2011]

Hosaka, S. 1997. 'The Internet and Middle East Studies', in *JIME Review*, 10 (36), available at: <http://pws.prserv.net/hosaka/shuji/Internet/The%20Internet%20and%20Middle%20East%20Studies.htm> [retrieved 5 May 2010]

Howe, W. 2010. 'A Brief History of the Internet: An anecdotal history of the people and communities that brought about the Internet and the Web', 24 March, available at: <http://www.walthowe.com/navnet/history.html> [retrieved 5 June 2010]

Huang, S. J. 2005. 'Diffusion Theory in an Internet Environment: Testing Four Key Components', paper presented to 6th *International Symposium on Online Journalism*, 8-9 April. Texas: Austin, USA

Huizingh, E. K. R. E. 2000 'The content and design of Web sites: an empirical study', in *Information Management*, 37(3), pp.123-134

Huxford, J. and Duda, N. 2000. 'Cultures in Collision: Newspapers and the Internet', in paper presented at the annual conference of the *International Communication Association*, Acapulco: Mexico

IFEX (International Freedom of Expression Exchange). 2009. 'Newspaper under pressure because of political tension', 28 April, available at:

http://www.ifex.org/syria/2009/04/28/newspaper_under_pressure_because
[retrieved 17 March 2011]

Ihlström, C. and Lundberg, J. 2004. 'A Genre Perspective on Online Newspaper Front Page Design', in *Journal of Web Engineering*, 3 (1), pp. 50-74

Ijeoma, D. O.; Chidiebere, A. N.; and Chukwuedozie, K. A. 2013. 'The Implications of the Rise in Social Networking Sites on the Newspaper Industry in Nsukka Urban Area, Nigeria', in *Greener Journal of Internet, Information and Communication System*, 1 (3), pp. 79-86

Ingram, D. and Henshall, P. 2008. 'The News Manual: A professional resource for journalists and the media', in *News Pictures*, Volume 2, chapter 46, available at: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2_46.htm
[retrieved 12 June 2009]

Internews Network Report. 2009. 'Behind the scenes: Transparency in Lebanese Media Business Practices', available at: http://www.internews.org/prs/2009/20090309_lebanon.shtm [retrieved 22 March 2011]

Jankowski, N. and Selm, M. 2000. 'Traditional News Media Online: An Examination of Added Value', in *International Journal of Communication Research*, Vol. 25, pp. 85-101

Jenkins, H. 2001. 'Digital Renaissance: Convergence? I diverge', in *Technology Review*, June, available at: <http://www.techreview.com/magazine/jun01/jenkins.asp> [retrieved 15 June 2009]

Jensen, J. F. 1998. 'Interactivity: Tracking a New Concept in Media and Communication Studies', in *Nordicom Review*, (U. Carlsson, ed). 19 (1), June, pp.185-204

Jensen, K. B. 2002. *A Handbook of Media and Communication: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies*, London & New York: Routledge

Jilfar, A. 2006. 'Consolidating Arab Media through the Internet', تعزيز الاعلام (العربي عبر الانترنت), in *The Arab Media in the Era of Information*, الاعلام العربي في (عصر المعلومات), Abu Dhabi, UAE: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, p. 195

Kahn, R. E. and Vinton G. C. 1999. 'What is the Internet (And What Makes It Work)', *Corporation for National Research Initiatives*, paper prepared by the authors at the request of the Internet Policy Institute

Kamalipour, Y. R. and Mowlana, H. 1994. *Mass Media in the Middle East: A Comprehensive Handbook*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press

- Kamerer, D. and Bressers, B. 1998. 'Online Newspapers: A Trend study of news content and technical features', in paper presented at the *81th annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*, Baltimore, USA
- Karam, J. 2002. 'Ink and Satellite of Media's Defaults and Its Treatment after the Television Election Earthquake' "الزلازل" (حبر وأقمار في العورات الاعلامية وعلاجاتها بعد "الزلازل"), in *Annahar* newspaper, Issue number 21296, Beirut, p.17
- Karam, J. 2005. 'Ink and Satellite: Rebellion or Quick Transformation' (حبر وأقمار انقلابات أم تحولات عابرة), in *Annahar Newspaper*, Issue number 22185, Beirut, p.19
- Katz, J., 1994 , 'Online or Not, Newspapers Suck: How can any industry which regularly pulls Doonesbury strips for being too controversial possibly hope to survive online?', in *WIRED*, September, available at: http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/2.09/news.suck_pr.html [retrieved 11 June 2011]
- Kawzally, S. 2009. 'From journalism to the Parliament, Lebanese merge media and politics', in *Menassat Online Magazine*, 23 June, available at: <http://www.menassat.com/?q=en/news-articles/6669-journalism-parliament-lebanese-merge-media-and-politics> [retrieved 5 March 2011]
- Kenney, K.; Gorelik, A.; and Mwangi, S.; 2000. 'Interactive features of online newspapers', in *First Monday*, 5 (1), available at: http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue5_1/kenney/ [retrieved 6 December 2009]
- Kerlinger, F. N. and Lee, H. B. 2000. *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, (4th edition), New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston
- Khaddaj, A. 2011. 'Lebanon's proposed Internet law struggles to gain IT sector support', in *Al-Shorfa* online newspaper, 17 August, available at: http://al-shorfa.com/cocoon/meii/xhtml/en_GB/features/meii/features/main/2011/08/17/feature-02 [retrieved 17 February 2012]
- Khalidi, W. 1979. *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East*, Cambridge: Harvard University
- Khasawneh, N. A. and Sari, D. 2009. 'The Monarchical Democracy of Lebanon', in *Arab Comment Online Magazine*, 6 May, available at: www.arabcomment.com [retrieved 28 February 2011]
- Khoury, D. 1976. 'The Lebanese radio and television stations present: The reluctant Partisans', in *Monday Morning*, 28 March, pp. 40-44

- Khoury, K. 2006. 'The Lebanese in London', A documentary film for the fulfilment of a Master's degree in Film, Video and New Screen Media, University of East London: London
- Killebrew, K. C. 2005. *Managing Media Convergence: Pathways to Journalistic Cooperation*, Ames, Iowa, USA: Blackwell Publishing:
- Kim, S.; Scheufele, D.; and Shanaham, J. 2002. 'Think about it this way: Attribute agenda setting function of the press and the public's evaluation of a local issue', in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(1), pp. 7-23
- Kimber, S. 1997. 'The message is (still) the medium: the newspaper in the age of cyberspace', in *Information Processing & Management*, 33(5), pp. 595-597
- Klinenberg, E. 2005. 'Convergence: News Production in a Digital Age', in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 597(1), pp. 48-64
- Kothari, C. R. 2008. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, India: New Age International Publishers
- Kraidy, M. and Khalil J. F. 2007. 'The Middle East: Transnational Arab Television', in *The Media Globe: Trends in International Mass Media*, L. Artz and Y. R Kamalipour, eds) Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers
- Kress, G. and Van Leeuwen, T. 1996. *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design*, London: Routledge, p. 17
- Krippendorff, K. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*, California: Sage Publications
- Krumsvik, A. H. 2006. 'What is the strategic role of online newspapers?', in *Nordicom Review*, 27 (2), pp. 283-295
- Kung, L. 2008. 'Innovation and Creativity in the Media Industry: What? Where? How?', in *Management and Innovation in the Media Industry*, (Cinzia dal Zotto and Hans van Kranenburg eds), Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited
- Kwansah-Aidoo, K. 2005. *Topical Issues in Communications and Media Research*, Hauppauge, NY, Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Labaki, B. 1993. 'Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975-1989)', in *Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, (Hourani and Shehadi, eds) Center for Lebanese Studies and IB Tauris

- Lang, A. 1995. 'Defining Audio/Video Redundancy From a Limited Capacity Information Processing Perspective', in *Communication Research*, February, Volume 22, pp. 86-115
- Langer, S. 1957. 'Philosophy in a New Key: *A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*, Harvard: Harvard University Press
- Lapham, C. 1995. 'The Evolution of the Newspaper of the Future', in *CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) Magazine*, 1 July, available at: <http://www.ibiblio.org/cmc/mag/1995/jul/lapham.html> [retrieved 28 May 2009]
- Larsson, A. O. 2012. 'Doing Things in Relation to Machines: Studies on Online Activities', in Ph.D. research submitted to the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Uppsala, Sweden
- Lasica, J. 2001. 'Blogging as a form of journalism', in *Online Journalism Review*, 24 May, available at: <http://ojr.usc.edu/content/story.cfm?request=585> [retrieved 3 May 2010]
- Lawson-Borders, G. 2006. *Media Organizations and Convergence: Case Studies of Media Convergence Pioneers*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Layton, C. 2008. 'The Video Explosion', in *Philip Merrill College of Journalism: AJR*, December/ January, available at: <http://ajrarchive.org/article.asp?id=4428> [retrieved 10 June 2014]
- Lebanese Inner Circle. 2009. 'The Internet in Lebanon', 19 February, available at: <http://theinnercircle.wordpress.com/2009/02/19/update-the-Internet-in-lebanon/> [retrieved 3 May 2010]
- LeCompte, M. D. and Schensul, J. 1999. *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research*, USA: Altamira Press
- Leiner, B.; Cerf, G. V.; Clark, D.; Kahn, E.R.; Kleincrock, L.; Lynch, C. D. 2003. 'A Brief History of the Internet', available at: <http://www.isoc.org/Internet/history/brief.shtml#Future> [retrieved 30 April 2009]
- Leiner, B.; Cerf, V.; Clark, D.; Kahn, R.; Kleinrock, L.; Lynch, D.; Postel, J.; Roberts, L.; and Wolff, S. 1997. 'The Past and the Future History of the Internet', in *Communication of the ACM Magazine*, 40 (2), pp.102-108
- Levenson, M. 2008. 'Plan to shutter newsstand pierces heart of Harvard Square', in *The Global Boston*, available at: http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2008/11/20/plan_to_shutter_newsstand_pierces_heart_of_harvard_sq/ [retrieved 30 December 2008]
- Levins, H. 1997a. 'Attitude Adjustment', in *Editor & Publisher*, (28), pp. 44-45

- Levins, H. 1997d. 'Time of Change and Challenge', in *Editor & Publisher*, (4), pp. 58-60
- Levinson, P. 1999. *Digital McLuhan: A guide to the information Millennium*, London: Routledge
- Lewis, I. M. 1985. *Social Anthropology in Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Li, X. 1998. 'Web Page Design and Graphic Use of Three U.S. Newspapers', in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 75 (2), Summer, pp. 353-365.
- Li, X. 2006. *Internet Newspapers: The Making of a Mainstream Medium*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Lindoo, E. 1998. 'The Future of Newspapers: A study of the World Wide Web and its relationship to electronic publishing of Newspapers', in Ph.D. dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Florida: School of Computer and Information, Nova Southeastern University
- Lowrey, W. 1999. 'From map to machine: Conceptualizing and designing news on the Internet', in *Newspaper Research Journal*, Fall 1999, 20(4), pp. 14-26
- Lucena, A. A. 2011. 'The Print Newspaper in the Information Age: An Analysis of Trends and Perspectives', in *Proceedings of the Media Ecology Association*, Canada: University of Alberta, Volume 12, p. 53
- Lunde, P. 1981. 'Arabic and the Art of Printing', in *Saudi Aramco World: Arab and Islamic cultures and Connections*, March-April, 32 (2), Issue 198102, available at: <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/198102/arabic.and.the.art.of.printing-a.special.section.htm> [retrieved 25 July 2014]
- Lutz, F. W. and Ramsay, M. A. 1974. 'The use of anthropological field methods in education', in *Educational Researcher*, November, Volume 3, pp. 5-9
- MacGregor, P. 2003. 'Mind the gap: Problems of multimedia journalism', in *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 9(3), pp.8-17
- Macleod, S. 2006. 'Nayla Tueni: Journalist', in *Time Magazine*, Europe Edition, 14 May, available at: <http://www.time.com/time/europe/html/060522/tueni.html> [retrieved 8 March 2011]
- Madden, R. 2010. 'Being Ethnographic: A guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography', London: Sage Publications

- Mahajan, V., Muller, E., and Bass, F.M. 1990. 'New Products Diffusion Models in Marketing: A Review and Directions for Research'. *Journal of Marketing*, Volume 54, pp.1-26
- Malaspina, A. 2009. *Creation of the Modern Middle East: Lebanon*, New York: Infobase Publishing
- Mansour, B. 2008. 'Gebran Tueni: the man who was like thunder', UNESCO, No. 4, available at: <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php> [retrieved 10 January 2011]
- Marayti, M. 1999. 'The Arabic Language and the Internet' (اللغة العربية والانترنت), in *The Arabic Magazine for Science*, في المجلة العربية للعلوم, December, 43 (17), p. 71
- Marshall, A. 1983. *Changing the Word: The Printing Industry in Transition*, London: Comedia Publishing Group
- Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. 2006. *Designing Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications
- Martin, S. 1998. 'How News Gets from Paper to Its Online Counterpart', in *Newspaper Research Journal*, 19 (2), pp. 64-73
- Martin, S. 2009. 'Print is still king: Only 3 percent of newspaper reading happens online', in *Neiman Journalism Lab*, 13 April, available at: <http://www.niemanlab.org/2009/04/print-is-still-king-only-3-percent-of-newspaper-reading-actually-happens-online/> [retrieved 15 April 2009]
- Martin, S. and Hensen, K. 1998. *Newspapers of Record in a digital Age*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger
- Mason, J. 1996. *Qualitative Researching*, London: Sage Publications
- Massey, B. and Levy, M. 1999. 'Interactivity, Online Journalism, and English Language Web Newspapers in Asia', in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 76 (1), pp. 138-151
- Mastro, D.E. and Greenberg, B. 2000. 'The portrayal of racial minorities on prime television', *Journal of Applied Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 44(4), pp. 690-703
- Matt, 2011, 'Q&A: How Many Websites are there on the Internet?', *Tech Made Easy*, available at: <http://www.techmadeeasy.co.uk/2011/04/15/qa-how-many-websites-are-there-on-the-Internet/> [retrieved 13 August 2014]
- Mayer, R. E. and Moreno, R. 1998. 'A split-attention effect in multimedia learning: Evidence for dual processing systems in working memory', in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Volume 90, pp. 312-320

- Mayer, R. E. 2003. 'The promise of multimedia learning: Using the same instructional design methods across different media', in *Learning and Instruction*, Volume 13, pp. 125-139
- Mayo, K. and Peter, N. 2008. 'How The Web Was Won: An Oral History Of The Internet', in *Vanity Fair*: (96), *CPI.Q (Canadian Periodicals)*, Web. 31 Mar. 2010
- McAdams, M. 1994. 'Molding the Medium', in *Quill Journal*, pp. 30-34
- McAdams, M. 1995. 'Inventing an Online Newspaper', in *Interpersonal Computing and Technology: An Electronic Journal for the 21st century*, 3(3), pp. 64-90
- McGuire, M.; Stilborne, L.; McAdams, M.; and Hyatt, L. 2000. *The Internet handbook for writers, researchers, and journalists*, London: Guilford Press
- McKenzie, R. 2006. *Comparing Media from Around the World*, Boston: Pearson
- McLuhan, M. 1962. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The making of Typographic man*, Toronto: The University of Toronto Press
- McQuail, D. and Windahl, S. 1993. *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communications*, (2nd edition), London: Longman
- McQuail, D. 1994. *Mass communication theory: An introduction*, (3rd edition), London: Sage
- Meddah, M. 2009. 'Submit: The Conference for Middle Eastern Internet Entrepreneurs and Professionals (April 8-9th, 2009)', 23 February, available at: <http://www.startuparabia.com/2009/02/submit-the-conference-for-middle-eastern-internet-entrepreneurs-professionals-april-8-9th-2009/> [retrieved 17 February 2012]
- Meddah, M. 2009. 'Mobile Internet Users On The Rise in the Middle East', 5 March, in *Digital Marketing 2009 Informed and Cost Effective Marketing in Turbulent Times*, available at: http://www.ameinfo.com/digital_marketing_2009/ [retrieved 25 March 2009]
- Media, E. 2009. 'Regional Focus: Growing Internet usage in Middle East and North Africa', in *Euro-monitor International*
- Media Fact book. 2013. 'Investment Development Authority of Lebanon', Riad El-Solah, Beirut,, Lebanon: Invest in Lebanon
- Media Sustainability Index. 2014. 'The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Lebanon', Washington, DC: IREX
- Melki, J.; Dabbous, Y.; Nasser, K.; Mallat, S.; Shawwa, M.; Oghia, M.; Bachoura, D.; Shehayeb, Z.; Khozam, I.; Hajj, A.; and Hajj, S. 2012. 'Mapping Digital

Media: Lebanon', in *The Open Society Foundation*, 15 March, available at: <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/mapping-digital-media-lebanon-20120506.pdf> [retrieved 10 April 2014]

Mellor, N. 2005. *The Making of Arab News*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Mellor, N. 2007. *Modern Arab Journalism*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Mellor, N. 2010. 'Arab creative women', in *Viewpoints* (special issue), August, Washington, DC: the Middle East Institute

MEMRI (Middle East Media Research Institute). 2009. 'Prominent Lebanese journalist Charles Ayyoub turns against Syria', available at: <http://www.lebanonwire.com/0905MLN/09050214MEMRI.asp> [retrieved 3 December 2010]

Mena Media Survey. 2013. *Media Use in the Middle East: An Eight-Nation Survey*, Qatar: Northwestern University available at: <http://menamediasurvey.northwestern.edu/#> [retrieved 12 June 2014]

Meyers, M. 1992. 'Reporters and beats: The making of oppositional news', in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 9(1), pp. 75-91

Midgley, H. 2007. 'The Murdoch Inheritance', in *Bits of News Online Newspaper*, available at: <http://www.bitsofnews.com/> [retrieved 1 March 2011]

Migliorino, N. 2008. *(Re)constructing Armenia in Lebanon and Syria: Ethno-cultural Diversity and the State in the Aftermath of a Refugee Crisis*, USA: Berghahn Books, pp. 122-132

Mills, A. 2009. 'Revisiting Lebanon: Journalists are seen as just another casualty category', available at: <http://www.journalism.co.uk/news-commentary/revisiting-lebanon--journalists-are-seen-as-just-another-casualty-category-/s6/a536367/> [retrieved 15 February 2012]

Millison, D. 1999. 'Online Journalism FAQ', available at: <http://www.online-journalist.com/faq.html> [retrieved 7 April 2014]

Mitra, S. 2008. 'Newspapers Struggling: Gannet, New Your Times and McClatchy & Co', in *Seeking Alpha*, available at: <http://seekingalpha.com/article/108712-newspapers-struggling-gannett-new-york-times-mcclatchy-co> [retrieved 30 December 2008]

Moghdam, D. 1978. *Computer in Newspaper Publishing*, New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc.

Morris, M. and Ogan, C. 1996. 'The Internet as Mass Medium', in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 23 June, 1(4)

Morse, M., 2003. 'Principles of Mixed Methods research in the social sciences: the research for multiple methods of inquiry and the end of the philosophy of formalism', in *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research* (Tashakkori and Teddlie, eds), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, pp. 189-208

Mortiz, B. 2012. *The Social Newsroom: Social media and the evolution of journalists' routine*, Syracuse, NY: Newspaper and Online News Division

Mouzafar, H. 1999. 'Will the Virtual Aspect of the Computer Replace the Factual One' (الواقع الافتراضي في الحاسوب هل يحل بديلا عن الواقع الملموس), in *The Arabic Magazine for Education, Culture and Science*, 34 (17), Tunisia, p. 89

Murray, J. 1997. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*, New York: The Free Press

Myers, M. D. 1999. 'Investigating Information Systems with Ethnographic Research', in *Communications of Association for Information Systems AIS*, Volume 2, Article 23

Nash, M. 2009. 'Talking To: Beirut I candidate Nayla Tueni', in *Now Lebanon* online newspaper, available at:
<http://www.nowlebanon.com/NewsArchiveDetails.aspx?ID=86684> [retrieved 6 March 2011]

Nasr, H. 2003. *The Media and the Internet: The Electronic Journalism*, (الانترنت) , والاعلام.. الصحافة الالكترونية) Al-Ein, Egypt: Falah Library for publishing and distributing, p.13

Negroponte, N. 1995. 'The DNA of Information', in *Being Digital*, London: Coronet Books, Hodder and Stoughton

Neuberger, C.; Tonnemacher, J.; Biebl, M.; and Duck, A. 1998. 'The Future of Newspapers? Germany's Dailies on the World Wide Web', Catholic University of Eichstätt, Department of Journalism, JCMC, 4(1)

Nguyen, A.; Ferrier, L.; Western, M.; and McKay, S. 2005. 'Online News in Australia: patterns of use and gratification', in *Australian Studies in Journalism*, (15), pp. 5-34

Nguyen, A. 2007. 'The Interaction between Technology and Society: lessons learnt from 160 evolutionary years of online news', in *First Monday*, 12 (3), http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue12_3/nguyen/index.html [retrieved 21 March 2007]

Nielsen, J. and Morkes, J. 1997. 'Concise, scannable, and objective: How to write for the Web', *Sun Microsystems Paper*, available at: <http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/writing.html> [retrieved 3 July 2008]

Nielsen, J. 2006. 'Participation Inequality: Encouraging More Users to Contribute', NNG (Nielson Norman Group), retrieved at: <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/participation-inequality/> [retrieved 11 April 2014]

Nielsen Global Survey. 2012. 'Global Online Consumers and Multi-Screen Media: Today and Tomorrow', in *Report 2012*, 15 May, available at: <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/reports/2012/global-online-consumers-and-multi-screen-media-today-and-tomorr.html> [retrieved 5 June 2014]

Nigam, M. 2008. 'Consumer Magazines in Flux: An investigation of Internet adoption by women's fashion and beauty magazines in the United Kingdom', in *Culture, Communication and Globalization*, UK: Aalborg University

Nobil, A. 2010. 'Is Twitter a useful tool for Journalists?', in *Journal of Media Practice*, 11(12), pp. 145-155

Ohiagu, O. P. 2011. 'The Internet: The Medium of the Mass Media', in *Kiabara Journal of Humanities*, 16 (2), pp. 225-232

Okunna, C. S. and Omenugha, K. A. 2012. *Introduction to Mass Communication*, (3rd edition), Enugu: New Generations Books

O'Neill, M. 2011. '85% Of Media Websites Now Use Online Video To Cover News', *Social Times*, available at: http://socialtimes.com/85-of-media-websites-now-use-online-video-to-cover-news_b60505 [retrieved 6 June 2014]

Oostendorp, Van H. and Nimwegen, Van C. 1998. 'Locating Information in an Online Newspaper', in *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 4 (1), available at: <http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc/vol4/issue1/oostendorp.html> [retrieved 23 June 2011]

Opgenhaffen, M. 2009. 'Multimedia, interactivity and hypertexts in online news: Effect on News Processing and Objective and Subjective Knowledge', in Ph.D. research submitted to the department the Catholic University of Leuven: Belgium

Opgenhaffen, M., 2011, 'Multimedia, interactive and hyper-textual features in divergent online news platforms: An exploratory study of Flemish online news', in *First Monday*, 16 (3), available at: <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2826/2814> [retrieved 24 April 2014]

Orr, G. 2003. 'Diffusion of Innovations, by Everett Rogers (1995)', available at: <http://www.stanford.edu/class/symbsys205/Diffusion%20of%20Innovations.htm> [retrieved 20 January 2012]

- Ortiz, A. 2003. 'The Ethnographic Interview', in *Research in the college context: approaches and Methods* Ed. by Frances Stage and Kathleen Manning, New York: Brunner-Routledge
- Outing, S. 1998. 'What Exactly is Interactivity?', in *E & P Interactive*, available at: <http://www.mediainfo.com/ephome/news/newshtm/stop/st120498.htm> [retrieved 10 May 2014]
- Outing, S. 2000. 'Making the Most of Digital Dollars', in *Editor and Publisher*, pp. 18–19
- Outing, S. 2001. 'Yes, interactivity is really good for your site', in *Editor and Publisher Online*, 'Stop The Presses!' column, 14 February, available at: <http://www.editorandpublisher.com/ephome/news/newshtm/stop/st021401.htm> [retrieved 20 February 2009]
- Paivio, A. 1986. *Mental representations: a dual coding approach*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Patel, A. 2010. 'The Survival of the Newspaper in the Digital Age of Communication', thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Science, College Leonard N. Stern School of Business, New York: New York University
- Paterson, C. A. and Domingo, D. 2008. *Making Online News: The Ethnography of New Media Production*, New York: Peter Lang
- Paulussen, S. 2004. 'Online news production in Flanders: How Flemish online journalists perceive and explore the Internet's potential', in *Journal of Computer–Mediated Communication*, 9 (4), available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2004.tb00300.x/abstract> [retrieved 24 April 2014]
- Pavlik, J. 1997. 'The future of online journalism: Bonanza or Black hole?', *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August, pp. 30-36, available at: <http://backissues.cjrarchives.org/year/97/4/online.asp> [retrieved on November 21, 2011]
- Pavlik, J. 2000. 'The Impact of Technology on Journalism', in *Journalism Studies*, 1(2), pp. 229–37
- Pavlik, J. V. 2001. *Journalism and New Media*, New York: Columbia University Press
- Pearce, C. 1997. *The Interactive book: A Guide to the Interactive Revolution*, Indianapolis: Macmillan Technical Publishing

- Pearse, D. 2008. 'US paper stops the presses to focus online', in *The Guardian*, available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/oct/29/christian-science-monitor> [retrieved 30 December 2008]
- Perlman, J. 2002. 'Print Sites Still Wary of Chatting it Up', in *Online Journalism Review*, available at: <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/business/1017968634.php> [retrieved 8 April 2014]
- Petran, T. 1976. *The Struggle over Lebanon*, New York: Monthly Review Press
- Polsby, N. W. 1984. *Political Innovation in America*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press
- Posner, H. M. 2011. 'Internet Freedom and Human Rights: The Obama Administration's Perspective', in *Remarks to the New America Foundation "Future Tense" Conference Washington, DC*, US Department of State: Diplomacy in Action, available at: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/rm/2011/168475.htm> [retrieved 13 February 2012]
- Poster, M. 1998. 'Virtual ethnicity: Tribal identity in an age of global communications', in *Cybersociety 2.0*, (Steven Jones ed.), London, California: Sage Publications, p. 188
- Potter, D. 2004-2005. 'Conflicts of Interests: The line between politics and journalism has almost vanished', in *American Journalism Review*, December-January, Issue No. 69, available at: <http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=3805> [retrieved March 2011]
- Potter, D. 2009. 'Why online news should stay free', in *News Lab*, available at: <http://www.newslab.org/2009/11/06/why-online-news-should-stay-free/> [retrieved 9 November 2011]
- Priest, S. 1996. *Doing Media Research: An Introduction*, London: Sage Publications
- Privacy International*. 2003. 'Regional Report: Silenced – The Middle East Profile', available at: <https://www.privacyinternational.org/> [retrieved 25 March 2010]
- Quandt, T. 2008. '(NO) News on the World Wide Web?', in *Journalism Studies*, 9 (5), pp. 717-738
- Quinn, S. 2000, 'The Battle for Australia's Eyeballs: an overview', in *Online Journalism Review*, July, available at: <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/business/1017963406.php> [retrieved 7 April 2010]
- Quinn, S. 2005. 'Convergence's Fundamental Question', in *Journalism Studies*, 6 (1), pp. 29-38

- Radolf, A. 1981. 'Public Firms Expand Electronic Horizons', in *Editor & Publisher*, 3(15), p. 28
- Rafaeli, S. 1988. 'Interactivity: From New Media to Communication', in *Advancing Communication Science: Merging Mass and Interpersonal Processes*, (R. Hawkins; J. Wiemann; & S. Pingree, eds), Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 110–34
- Rafaeli, S. and Sudweeks F. 1997. 'Networked interactivity', in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 2 (4), available at: <http://jcmc.huji.ac.il/vol2/issue4/rafaeli.sudweeks.html> [retrieved 11 April 2009]
- Rainie, L.; Kiesler, S.; Kang, R.; and Madden, M.; 2013. 'Anonymity, Privacy, and Security Online', in *Pew Research Internet Project*, available at: <http://www.pewInternet.org/2013/09/05/anonymity-privacy-and-security-online/> [retrieved 23 April 2014]
- Reddick, R. and King, E. 1995. *The Online Journalist: Using the Internet and other Electronic Resources*, Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publishers
- Reese, S. 2001. 'Understanding the global journalist: A hierarchy-of-influences approach', in *Journalism Studies*, 2(2), pp. 173-187
- Regional Report. 2003. 'Silenced – The Middle East Profile', in *Privacy International*, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Privacy_International
- Reuters. 2010. 'Public debt in Lebanon rising to \$55 billion in 2010', *YaLibnan* online newspaper, available at: <http://www.yalibnan.com/2010/04/15/7051/> [retrieved 13 February 2012]
- Reuters. 2011. 'Customized Typeface for Lebanon's An-Nahar Newspaper Debuts in its Redesign', in *Reuters websites*, available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/04/12/idUS44165+12-pr2011+BW20110412> [retrieved 28 July 2011]
- Reuters. 2011. 'Lebanon speeds up Internet, slashes rates: minister', in *Al-Arabia news*: Beirut, available at: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/10/01/169657.html> [retrieved 20 January 2012]
- Rice, R. E. and Williams, F. (eds) 1984. 'Theories old and new: The Study of new media', in *The New media: Communication, research, and technology*, Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, pp. 55-80
- Rieder, R. 1999. 'Spend the Money, Go the Distance', in *AJR (American Journalism Review)* Online, July/August, available at: <http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=718> [retrieved 12 August 2014]

Rieder, R. 2006. 'A merger we like – Integrating print and online operations seems like a smart move', *American Journalism Review*, December/January, available at: <http://ajrarchive.org/Article.asp?id=4033> [retrieved 20 November 2011]

Riffe, D.; Lacy, S.; and Frederick, F. 2005. 'Analyzing media Messages: Using Qualitative Content Analysis in Research', (2nd edition), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Rinnawi, K. 2006. *Instant Nationalism: McArabism, Al-Jazeera, and Transnational Media in the Arab World*: New York, University Press of America

Robinson, L., 2009, 'A summary of Diffusion of Innovations, Enabling change: tools, training, strategy, facilitation', January, available at: http://www.enablingchange.com.au/Summary_Diffusion_Theory.pdf [retrieved 22 January 2012]

Rogan, E. 2009. *The Arabs: A history*, New York: Basic Books

Rogers, E. and Shoemaker, F. 1971. *Communication of Innovations: A cross cultural approach*, (2nd edition), New York: The Free Press

Rogers, E. M. 1983. *Diffusion of Innovations*, New York: Free Press

Rogers, E.M. 1995. *Diffusion of Innovations*, (4th edition), New York: The Free Press

Rogers, E. M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*, (5th edition), New York: Free Press

Rogers, E. and Scott, K. 1997. 'The Diffusion of Innovations Model and Outreach from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to Native American Communities', in *Department of Communication and Journalism*, University of New Mexico, a paper prepared for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region, Seattle, available at: <http://nnlm.gov/archive/pnr/eval/rogers.html> [retrieved 25 January 2012]

Roland, J. 2003. *Lebanon: Current Issues and Background*, Hauppauge, New York: Nova Science Publishers

Rosensteel, S. 2013. 'Why Online Video is Vital for Your 2013 Content marketing Objective', in *Forbes Magazine*, 28 January, available at: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/seanrosensteel/2013/01/28/why-online-video-is-vital-for-your-2013-content-marketing-objectives/> [retrieved 5 June 2014]

Roy, A. and Harwood, J. 1997. 'Under-represented, positively portrayed: Older adults in television commercials', in *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 25(1), pp. 39-56

Rubin, R. B.; Rubin, A. M.; and Piele, L. J. 2005. *Communication research: Strategies and sources*, Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadworth

- Rugh, W. A. 2004. *Arab Mass Media: Newspapers, Radio, and Television in Arab Politics*, Westport, USA: Praeger Publishers
- Russial, J. T. 1994. 'Pagination and newsroom: A question of time', *Newspaper Research Journal*, Winter, pp. 91-99
- Sabbagh, D. 2009. 'Geographical Distribution of the Lebanese Diaspora', in *Lebanese Heritage*, available at: <http://theidentitychef.com/2009/09/06/lebanese-diaspora-worldwide-geographical-distribution/> [retrieved 12 July 2014]
- Sara, A. 2010. 'A tangled Web: A new Law for web-based Media?', in *NowLebanon Online Newspaper*, available at: <http://www.nowlebanon.com/NewsArchiveDetails.aspx?ID=198393> [retrieved 17 October 2011]
- Sakagami, H. and Kamba, T. 1997. 'Learning Personal Preferences on online newspaper articles from user behaviors', in *Computer Networks and ISDN Systems* 29, pp. 1447-1455
- Sakr, A. E. R. 1999. 'The Project of the International World Language' مشروع لغة (المجلة العربية للعلوم, 34 (17), p. 68) in *The Arabic Magazine for Sciences*, الشبكات العالمية
- Saksena, S. and Hollifield, C. A. 2002. 'U.S. Newspapers and the Development of Online Editions', *JMM: The International Journal on Media Management*, 4 (2), pp.75-84, available at: <http://www.mediajournal.org/ojs/index.php/jmm/article/viewFile/221/101> [retrieved 17 June 2014]
- Salaverria, R. 2005. 'An immature medium: Strengths and weaknesses of online newspapers', *Gazette*, 67(1), pp. 69-86
- Saleh, K. S. 1998. 'The Arab Journalism in the Internet' الصحافة العربية في (المجلة العربية, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Issue number 36, p. 27) الانترنت
- Salibi, K. 1976. *Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976*, New York: Caravan Books
- Salibi, K. 1988. *A House of Many Mansions, the history of Lebanon Reconsidered*, London: University of California Press
- Samii, C. 2012. 'Lebanon after the 1984-1990 civil war', (Ed. Samantha Bonaparte), New York University, available at: <https://wikis.nyu.edu/display/cpeaa/Lebanon+after+the+1984-1990+civil+war> [retrieved 15 July 2014]
- Sanchez, R. 2007. 'Changing reporters' beats – with a focus on local', in *Nieman Reports*, 61(4), pp. 52-53

- Sanchez-Gonzalez, M. and Alonso, J. 2012. 'Methodological proposal for the Analysis of user Participation Mechanisms in Online Media', in *Revista Latina de Comunicacion Social*, 67, pp. 148-178
- Sanday, P. R. 1979. 'The Ethnographic Paradigm(s)', in *Administrative Science Quarterly* (24) 4, pp. 527-538
- Santana, A. 2014. 'Virtuous or Vitriolic: The Effect of Anonymity on Civility in Online Newspaper Reader Comment Boards', in *Journalism Practice*, 8 (1), pp. 18-33
- Saussure, D. F. 1972. *A Course in General Linguistics*, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Company
- Scharrer, E. 2001. 'From wise to foolish: the portrayal of the sitcom father, 1950s-1990s', in *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 45(1), pp. 23-40
- Schmitz, W. A. and De Macedo, H. J. V. 2009. 'Compressed dimensions in digital media occupations: Journalists in transformation', in *Journalism*, 10, pp. 587-604
- Schmitz, W. A. and Domingo D. 2010. 'Innovation processes in online newsrooms as actor-networks and communities of practice', in *New Media & Society*, 12(7), pp. 1156-1171
- Schultz, T. 1999. 'Interactive options in online journalism: A Content analysis of 100 U.S. newspapers', in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 5 (1), available at: <http://jcmc.huji.ac.il/vol5/issue1/schultz.html> [retrieved 10 March 2010]
- Schultz, T. 2000. 'Mass Media and the Concept of Interactivity: An Exploration', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 4 (1), available at: <http://ascusc.org/jcmc/vol4/issue1/singer2.html> [retrieved 10 April 2014]
- Sekaran, U. 2000. *Research Models for Business: A skill-building Approach*, (3rd edition), New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Selvin J. 2000. *The Internet and Society*, Malden, USA: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Severin, W. J. and Tankard, J. W. 1992. *Communication Theories: Origins, methods, and uses in the mass media*, (3rd edition), New York: Longman
- Seward, Z. 2009. 'Top 15 Newspaper Sites of 2008', in *Neiman Journalism Lab*, available at: <http://www.neimanlab.org/2009/02/top-15-newspaper-sites-of-2008/> [retrieved 13 April 2009]

- Sfeir, R. 2008. 'The Reality of Arabic Journalism: A Debate in Dubai Between Arab Journalists' (واقع الصحافة العربية موضع نقاش بين صحافيين عررب في دبي), in *Annahar newspaper*, Issue number 23331, Beirut, p.10
- Shareem, R. 2000. 'The Arab Media in the Internet: A Descriptive Approach' (العربي في الانترنت مقارنة وصفية) (الاعلام), in final University Project in The Faculty of Journalism and News Reporting, Tunisia, p. 27
- Shiver, J. Jr. 2006. 'By the Numbers', in *American Journalism Review*, available at: <http://ajrarchive.org/Article.asp?id=4121> [retrieved 15 November 2011]
- Shoemaker, P. and Reese, S. 1991. *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influence on Media Content*, (2nd Edition), White Plains, New York: Longman
- Shoemaker, P. and Reese, S. 1996. *Mediating the message: Theories of influence on mass media content*, White Plains, New York: Longman
- Shoemaker, P. and Vos, T. 2009. *Gatekeeping theory*, New York: Routledge
- Sigal, V.S. 1973. *Reporters and officials*, Lexington: DC Health
- Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, London: Sage Publications
- Silverman, D. 2004. *Interpreting Qualitative Data, Methods for Analyzing talk, Text and Interaction*, London: Sage Publications
- Singer, J. 1998. 'Online Journalists: Foundations for Research into Their Changing Roles', in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 4 (1), September, available at: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol.4/issue1/singer.html> [retrieved 6 January 2014]
- Singer, J. 2001. 'The Metro Wide Web: Changes in Newspapers' Gate-keeping Role Online', in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, issue 78, pp. 65-80
- Slappendel, C. 1996. 'Perspectives on Innovation in Organizations', *Organization Studies*, pp. 107-129
- Smolkin, R. 2006. 'Adapt or Die', *American Journalism Review*, Jun/Jul, 28 (3), pp. 16-23
- Sonderman, J. 2012. 'One-third of Adults under 30 Get News on Social Networks Now', in *Poynter*, Web. 27, available at: <http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/mediawire/189776/one-third-of-adults-under-30-get-news-on-social-networks-now/> [retrieved 11 June 2014]

- Soueid, M.; Ghanem, S.; Hariri, Z.; Yamout, N.; and Nehme, R. 2014. 'Analysis of Lebanon's Media and Advertising Sector', in Special Report by the Market & Economic Research Division in Bank Mediterranean, Lebanon, available at: <http://www.bankmed.com.lb/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=iChkWm9BdOI%3D&portalid=0> [retrieved 23 July 2014]
- Sousa, H. 2006. 'Information Technologies, Social Change and the Future: The Case of Online Journalism in Portugal', in *European Journal of Communication*, 21(3), pp. 373–87
- Specker, N. 1999. 'Executive Summary', 6th *Interactive Publishing Europe Conference*, Zurich, available at: http://www.interactivepublishing.ch/99.sum_1.php [retrieved 23 March 2010]
- Spradley, J. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston
- Spyridou, P. and Veglis, A. 2008. 'Exploring structural interactivity in online newspapers: A look at the Greek web landscape', in *First Monday: Peer Reviewed Journal on the Internet*, 13 (5)
- Stacks, D. W. 2011. *Primer of Public Relations Research*, (2nd edition), New York: The Guilford Press
- Stamm, K.; Underwood, D.; and Giffard, A. 1995. 'How pagination affects the job satisfaction of editors', in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Winter, pp. 851-862
- Steensen, S. 2009. 'The shaping of an online feature journalist', *Journalism*, 10(5), pp. 702–718, London: Sage Publications, available at: <http://jou.sagepub.com/content/10/5/702> [retrieved 21 November 2011]
- Stelter, B. 2008. 'Finding Political News Online, The Young Pass It On', in *New York Times*, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/27/us/politics/27voters.html?_r=2 [retrieved 13 October 2010]
- Stempel, G. H. 2003. *Media and politics in America: A reference handbook*, California: ABC-CLIO, Inc., Santa Barbara, USA
- Stevens, J. 2013. 'Multimedia storytelling: learn the secrets from experts at multimedia storytelling institute 2014', UC Bereley Graduate School of Journalism, USA: California, available at: <http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/starttofinish/multimedia/> [retrieved 7 May 2014]
- Stewart, B. 1988. *The Media Lab: Inventing the future at MIT*, New York: Penguin Books

- Stober, R. 2004. 'What Media Evolution Is: A Theoretical Approach to the History of New Media', in *European Journal of Communication*, 19(4), pp. 483–505
- Stokes, J. 2009. 'Encyclopedia of the Peoples of Africa and the Middle East', in *Facts on File*, p. 406
- Sundar, S. 2000. 'Multimedia effects on processing and perception of online news: A Study of picture, audio, and video downloads', in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, Autumn, 77 (3), pp. 480-499
- Sylvie, G. and Witherspoon, P. 2002. *Time, Change, and the American Newspaper*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Symon, G. and Cassell, C. 1998. *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*, London: Sage Publications
- Tabar, P. 2010. 'Lebanon: A Country of Emigration and Immigration', in *Institute for Migration Studies*, Beirut: LAU Press
- Talhok, F. 2013. 'Aggression is Left Unpunished and Censorship is Back', in *Press and Cultural Freedom In Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine*, Annual Report by S. Keyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom: Samir Kassir Foundation: Beirut, p. 11
- Tankard, J.W. and Ban, H. 1998. 'Online newspapers: Living up to their potential?', in paper presented at the *81th annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*, Baltimore, USA
- Tarabishi, A. 1996. 'Internet: Introduction and Historical Background', (انترنت تقديم, مجلة معلوماتية: الحاسوب *The Magazine of Computers and Technology* ولمحة تاريخية) 5th year, Syria: Special Issue number 46, p. 19
- Tarde, G. 1890. *Les lois de l'imitation* [The Laws of Imitation and Invention], Paris: Félix Alcan
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. 2003. *Handbook of Mixed Methods in social and behavioural research*, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications
- Taylor, C.R. and Bang, H.K., 1997, 'Portrayals of Latinos in magazine advertising', in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(2), pp. 285-303
- Tesdell, G. R. 2007. 'Report on Major obstacles block growth of broadband Internet access in Middle East', in *MENAFN Jordan Times*, available at: http://www.menafn.com/qn_news_story_s.asp?StoryId=1093144939 [retrieved 25 March 2010]

- Terapinn. 2011. 'The Middle East's leading Internet business exhibition and conference', in *The Internet Show*, available at: <http://www.terrapinn.com/exhibition/Internet-show-middle-east/index.stm> [retrieved 18 February 2012]
- Thomas, J. 1993. *Doing Critical Ethnography*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications
- Thurlow, C.; Lengel, L.; and Tomic, A. 2004. *Computer mediated communication: Social interaction and the Internet*, London: Sage Publications
- Trench, B. 1997. 'Interactive newspapers: from access to participation', in paper presented to the *Society of Newspaper Design*, Denmark: Billund
- Tucher A. 1997. 'Why Web warriors might worry', in *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August, available at: <http://www.cjr.org/year/97/4/warriors.asp> [retrieved 9 April 2014]
- Tuchman, G. 1973. 'Making news by doing work: Routinizing the unexpected', in *The American Journal of Sociology*, 79(1), p. 110
- Tuchman, G. 1978. *Making news*, New York: Free Press
- Tueni, G. 1995. *The Secret of the Profession and Other Secrets*, Beirut: Dar Annahar for publication
- Tuggle, C. A. and Huffman, S. 2001. 'Live Reporting in Television News: Breaking News or Black Holes?', in *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, Spring, 45(2), pp. 335–344
- Tydemann, J.; Lipinski, H.; Adler, R.; Nyhan, M.; and Zwimpfer, L. 1982. *Teletext and videotex in the United States*, New York: McGraw-Hill
- Tyler, M. 1979. 'Videotex, Prestel and teletext: The economics and politics of some electronic publishing media', in *Telecommunications Policy* (3), pp. 37–51
- UCIPLiban (Catholic International Union for Press), 2009, 'Al-Diyar's Article on Charbel Khalil harms the press and distorts the Lebanese media', (مقال "الديار" عن شربل خليل يسيء إلى الصحافة ويشوه وجه الإعلام اللبناني) 15 May, available at: http://ucipliban.org/arabic/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11584&Itemid=228 [retrieved 19 March 2011]
- UNESCO. 2008. 'EFA Global Monitoring Report', available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/> [retrieved 10 February 2012]
- United Nation Development Programme. 2003. 'Arab Human Development Report 2003', New York: Regional Bureau for Arab States

- Ursell, G. 2001. 'Dumping down or Shaping up? New Technologies, New Media, New Journalism', in *Journalism* 2(2), pp. 175–96
- Verrill, A. 2013. 'B2B Demand Generation Benchmark Industry View', in *Software Advice*, 24 July, available at: <http://www.softwareadvice.com/crm/industryview/demand-generation-benchmark-report-2013/> [retrieved 6 June 2014]
- Wakim, S. 1996. *Forever Lebanon*, Geneva: Switzerland
- Walizer, M. and Wienir, P. 1978. *Research Methods and Analysis: Searching for Relationships*, USA: Harper & Row
- Ward, M. 2002. *Online Journalism*, London: Routledge
- Watters, C.R. and Shepherd, M.A. 1997 b. 'The role of Genre in the Evolution of interfaces for the Internet', in *Proceedings of NET'97*, available at: <http://net97.ca/970326-03> [retrieved 20 June 2011]
- Wheeler, D. 2006. *The Internet in the Middle East: Global Expectations and Local Imaginations*, State University of New York Press: Albany
- Whyte, W.F. 1991. 'Comments for the SCS Critics', in *Reframing organizational culture*, (P. J. Frost, L. F. Moore, M. R. E. Louis, C. C. Lundberg, eds), Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications
- Williams, B. A. and Delli Carpini M.X. 2000. 'Unchained Reaction: The Collapse of Media Gatekeeping and the Clinton–Lewinsky Scandal', in *Journalism* 1(1); pp. 61–85
- Wilkinson, M. 1980. 'Viewdata: The Prestel system', in *Videotext*, (ed. E. Sigel), White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry, pp. 57–85
- Wilson, S. 1977. 'The use of ethnographic techniques in educational research', in *Review of Educational Research*, 47 (1), Winter, pp. 245–65
- Wimmer, R. and Dominick, J. 1994. *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, California: International Thompson Publishing
- Wimmer, R. and Dominick J. 2006. *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, (8th edition), USA: Thomson Wadsworth
- Winder, R. 2009. 'Using Multimedia in Online news', in *Media Helping Media*, available at: <http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/training-resources/online-journalism/370-maximising-multimedia-in-online-news-> [retrieved 2 May 2014]
- Winslow, C. 1996. *Lebanon: war and politics in a fragmented society*, London: Routledge

- Wolcott, H. F. 1999. *Ethnography: A way of seeing*, USA: Altamira Press
- Wollert, J. 1985. 'Technology and Journalism : What will the Future Hold?', in *Media Writing: News for the Mass Media*, Belmont California: Wadsworth Publishing
- Wurff, R. and Lauf, E. 2005. *Print and online newspapers in Europe: a comparative analysis in 16 countries*, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers
- Yin, R. K. 2009. *Case Study Research, Design and Methods*, (4th edition), Newbury Park: Sage Publications
- Yzer, M. and Southwell, B. 2008. 'New Communication Technologies, Old Questions', in *American Behavioural Scientist*, 2 (1), pp. 8-20
- Zahran, S. 2011. 'Minister of Communication, Al-Daouk, to Assafir newspaper : the National Council interpretation of law is just a jurisprudence. Who has the responsibility to decide about the electronic websites?' (الداعوق لـ«السفير» :قراءة المجلس على من تقع صلاحيات البت بموضوع المواقع الإلكترونية؟ الوطني للقانون مجرد اجتهاد), *Assafir newspaper*, 26 September, issue number 12022, available at: <http://www.assafir.com/Article.aspx?EditionId=1988&articleId=2724&ChannelId=47039&Author=%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85> [retrieved 26 October 2011]
- Zaller, J. 1999. 'Market Competition and News Quality', Paper prepared for presentation at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta: GA, available at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/zaller/News%20quality%20paper.PDF> [retrieved 15 July 2014]
- Zaltman, G.; Duncan, R.; and Holbeck, J. 1984. *Innovations and Organizations*, Florida: Kreiger, Malamar
- Zerba, A. 2004, 'Redefining multimedia towards a more packaged journalism online', in paper submitted to fifth international symposium on online journalism, Austin: University of Texas
- Zhou, S. 2004. 'Effects of visual intensity and audio-visual redundancy in bad news', in *Media Psychology*, 6 (3), pp. 237-256
- Zohrob, M. 1997. 'Internet in Lebanon started in 1995 and the Subscribers are 15 Thousand' (الانترنت في لبنان دخلت عام 1995 و المشتركون 15 ألفاً), in *Annahar newspaper*, Issue number 19789, Beirut, p. 8
- Zotto, C. D. and Kranenburg, H. V. 2008. *Management and Innovation in the Media Industry*, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Cheltenham, UK

List of Appendices

Appendix A: List of Questions for Editors-in-Chief and IT Manager

- 1- How many online journalists work in the online newspaper? How many ITs? Webmasters? Data officers? Technicians? Programmer?
- 2- Gender of journalists (Majority males/ females?)?
- 3- Are there shifts? How many journalists in each shift?
- 4- Based on which qualifications you hire your online journalists?
- 5- Who designs the online layout?
- 6- Why is it changing lately? Is it related to the 'Arab Spring Revolt' which took place in 2011 (since the change coincided with these events)? Or the growth of social media networks?
- 7- What has happened to the WEBTV of Annaharonline? Why it is not being updated regularly lately?
- 8- Why did you decided to launch the option of commenting on news?
- 9- Who monitors the comments written?
- 10- Has it contributed to healthy or robust debate about the public issues?
- 11- Is there a policy to comment on news? Or has the comments section degenerated into a cacophony of meaningless voice?
- 12- Who decides which video(s)- multimedia to upload?
- 13- Who chooses the vote question each day? When does it change? And how it is helpful? Objective? How can you know that the same person did not vote more than once?
- 14- What is the main aim of publishing an online version of a print newspaper?
- 15- Who is your targeted audience?
- 16- What did you expect when you launched an online version? Did it meet these expectations?
- 17- Is there a relationship between the online and print news? Staff? Journalists?
- 18- Who depends more on who? The online depends more on the print or vice versa?
- 19- Who supplies the news/ stories for the online? How do you get your stories?
- 20- What are the problems that the online version of a print newspaper is facing?

Appendix B: List of Questions for Online Journalists

1. A brief biography of the journalist: your job title; education; experience, fresh graduate? The years working in this online newspaper (or in any other online or print newspaper)?
2. If the journalist worked in a print newspaper and now he/she is working in an online newspaper, then what are the differences in both fields? which one he/she finds himself/herself more and why.....?
3. Who is an online journalist?
4. What is the role of an online journalist?
5. Is there deadline to submit your work?
6. Is there a work routine?
7. Who selects the online news content?
8. How it is selected? Shaped? Produced and transmitted?
9. Who selects the news?
10. What is the news selection policy?
11. Do you have editorial meetings?
 - If yes, when do you hold the editorial meeting (s)(morning, noon, evening)? Once or many times a day or depending on the importance of the events?
 - If no, do you attend the editorial news meeting of the print?
12. Who attends the editorial meetings? All online journalists or just webmasters/ editors-in-chief of the website?
13. Is there a webmaster for the internet version? Does he attend the meetings?
14. When do you update news? Is there a specific time in the day or depending on the importance of the events?
15. Which programme do you use to upload news?
16. Who uploads the news, you or the editor-in-chief or the IT....?
17. Is there a specific writing style for an online newspaper?
18. Does the style of writing in an online newspaper differ from the writing style of a print newspaper?
19. Who edits the news before posting it?
20. What is the online newspaper's political policy? Same as the print?

Appendix C: Born-on-the-web political newspapers in Lebanon

Online Newspaper	Place of Issue	Language	Website link
<i>7aki Sa7</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.7akisa7.com/
<i>14 March</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.14march.org/
<i>Al-Aman</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.al-aman.com/
<i>Alankabout</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.alankabout.com/
<i>Al-Awassef</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.al-awassef.com/
<i>Al-Bayan</i>	Tripoli	Arabic	www.albayanlebanon.com
<i>Al-Binaa</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.al-binaa.com/
<i>Al-Hawadeth</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.alhadathnews.net
<i>Al-Hayat</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.alhayat.com/
<i>Al-Hiwar</i>	Jal-El Deeb	Arabic	www.alhiwar.info/
<i>Al-Inshaa</i>	Tripoli	Arabic	www.al-inshaa.com/
<i>Al-Intiqad</i>	Beirut	Spanish, French, English Arabic	www.english.alahednews.com.lb/
<i>Al-Mughtarib</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.worldcat.org/title/mughtarib/oclc/42284854
<i>Al-Mushahed</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.almushahidassiyasi.com
<i>Al-Nabad</i>	Beirut	English	www.anmag.org/
<i>Al-Nafez News</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.alnafeznews.com/
<i>Al-Rassed</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.alrassedonline.com
<i>Al-Waie</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.newspaperhunt.com/papers/Lebanon/alwaie.php
<i>Ararad</i>	Beirut	Armenian	www.araraddaily.com/
<i>Attamaddon</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.attamaddon.com/
<i>Beirut Online</i>	Beirut	English	www.beirut-online.net/
<i>Cedar News</i>	Beirut	Arabic and English	www.cedarnews.net/
<i>Central News Agency</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.almarkazia.com/
<i>Echobeirut</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.echobeirut.com
<i>El-Kalima</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.el-kalima.com/
<i>El-Marada</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.elmarada.org/
<i>Elminieh</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.Elminieh.com ,
<i>Elnashra</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.elnashra.com
<i>Future Movement</i>	Beirut	English, Arabic and French	www.almustaqbal.org
<i>Iloubnan.info</i>	Beirut	French and English	www. Iloubnan.info
<i>Inn Lebanon</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.innlebanon.com/
<i>Kataeb</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.kataeb.org/EN
<i>Leb Journal</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebjournal.com/
<i>Lebanese American News</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebaneseamericannews.com/
<i>Lebanon 24</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebanon24.com
<i>Lebanon Debate</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebanondebate.com/
<i>Lebanon Post</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.libanpost.com.lb/
<i>Lebanese Files</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebanonfiles.com/
<i>Lebanese Forces</i>	Beirut	Arabic	www.lebanese-forces.com/

Lebanese Rights Organization	Beirut	Arabic	http://www.arabhumanrights.org/
Movement Of Independence	Beirut	Arabic	http://www.alharaka.org/
Naharnet	Beirut	Arabic and English	www.naharnet.com
National News Agency	Beirut	Arabic	www.nna-leb.gov.lb/en
New Orient News	Beirut	Arabic	www.neworientnews.com/
NOW Lebanon	Beirut	Arabic and English	www.nowlebanon.com
Only Lebanon : أخبار لبنان	Beirut	Arabic	http://www.onlylebanon.net/
Orient Reports	Beirut	Arabic	www.orientreports.com/
Ras Baalbeck Online	Ras Baalbeck	Arabic	www.rasbaalbeckonline.com/
Saida Online	Saida	Arabic	www.saidaonline.com/
Sawtaljabal	Aley	Arabic	www.sawtaljabal.com/
Sidonia News	Beirut, Saida & South Lebanon	Arabic	www.sidonianews.net/
Tahawolat	Beirut	Arabic	www.tahawolat.com/
Tayyar	Beirut	Arabic and French	www.tayyar.org
Vcoders	Beirut	Arabic and English	www.vcoders.org/
Ya Libnan	Beirut	English	www.yalibnan.com
Youkal	Beirut		www.youkal.net
Zartonk	Beirut		www.zartonkdaily.com/

Appendix D: Sample of the Recording Form for the Presence of Interactive features

	Annaharonline	Aldiyaronline	Elnashra	Total
Graphics added to story				
E-mail link to editorial board or author				
Link relevant to the story added				
Discussion forum on the subject of the article				
Comments on the article				
Links that allow the user to navigate within the article				
Links which allow the user to navigate within the web site				
Links to other sites				
Animation				
Music				
Sounds				
Video sequences				
Photo album				
Computer/Net research (list of links)				
Search in the website				
Archive				
Entertainment (games, comics etc.)				
Statistics/Voting				
Events database				
SMS to mobile device				
Other local information (weather, currency...)				
Travel offers				
Special offers for young people				
Subscription				
Facilities to place advertisements				
Frequent updates				
Total				

Appendix E: Sample of the Recording Form for the Commenting on News and Multimedia Features

Date: -----				
Commenting on news				
	<i>Annaharonline</i>	<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	<i>Elnashra</i>	Total
Number of news with comments				
Number of comments				
Genre of the news which have the comments (political, social, economic, international...)				
Categories of comments				
Use of Multimedia				
	<i>Annaharonline</i>	<i>Aldiyaronline</i>	<i>Elnashra</i>	Total
Number of news with multimedia				
Kind (video, sound, pictures, slideshows...)				
Significance				
Location				
Source				
Added Value				

Appendix F: Newspaper Market in Lebanon in 2009-2013

Chart 1: The Most read Lebanese Print Newspaper

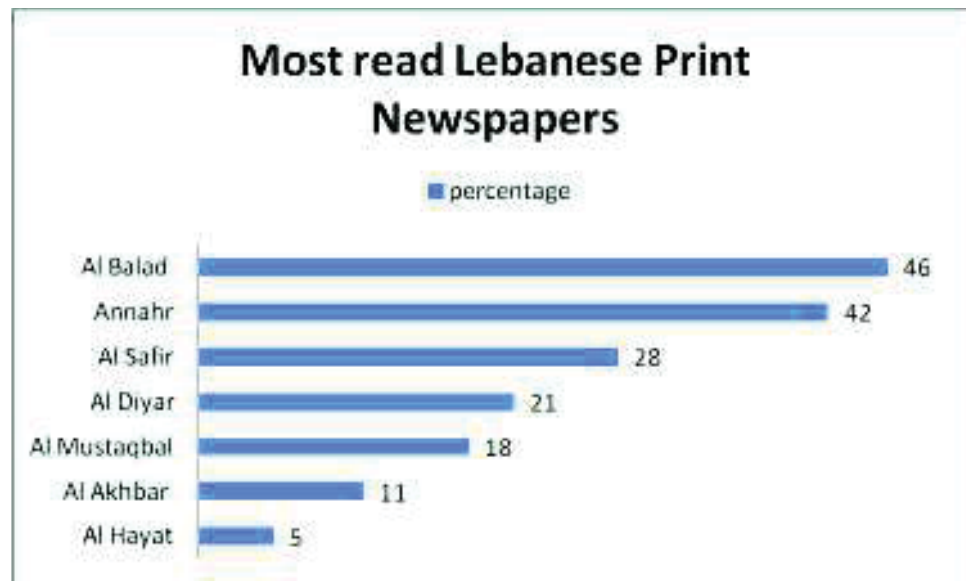


Chart 2: The Most Visited News Website

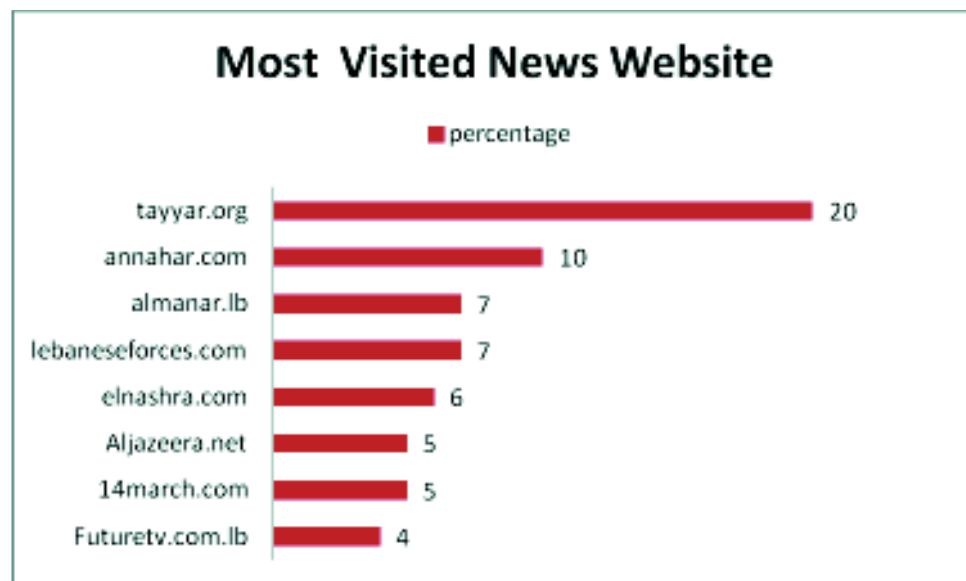


Chart 3: Reasons for Reading a Newspaper

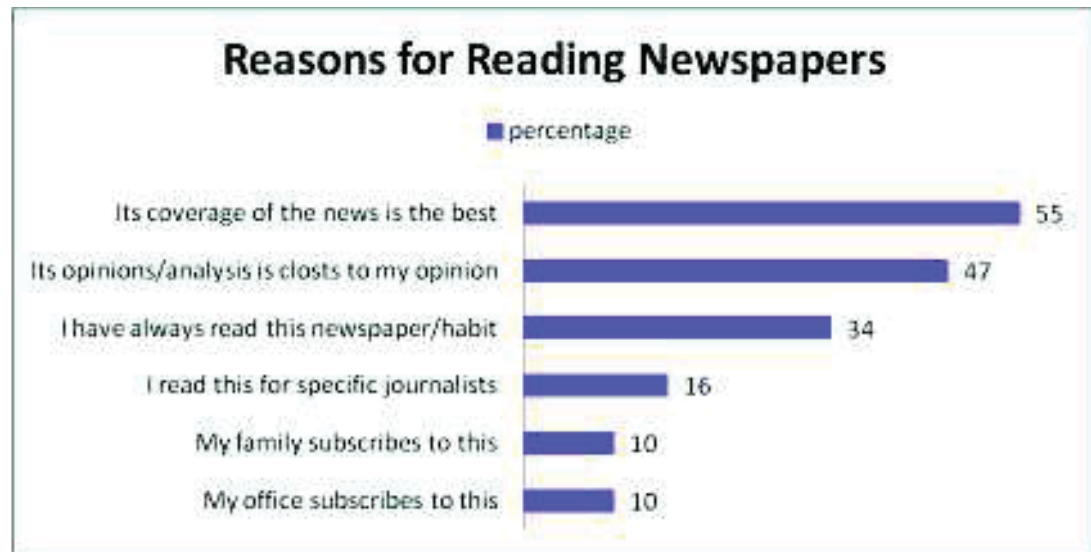


Chart 4: Frequency of Buying a Print Newspaper

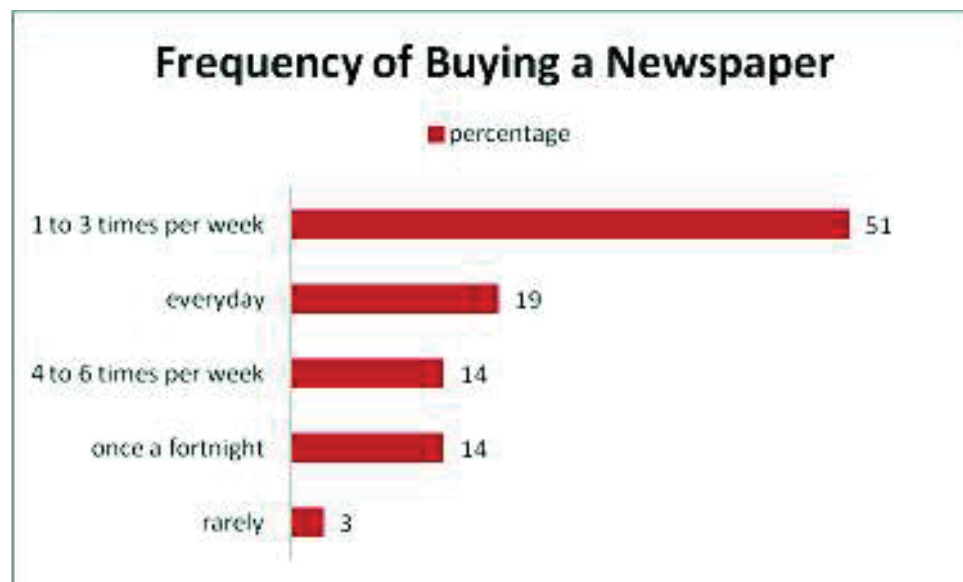


Chart 5: Frequency of Reading News Online

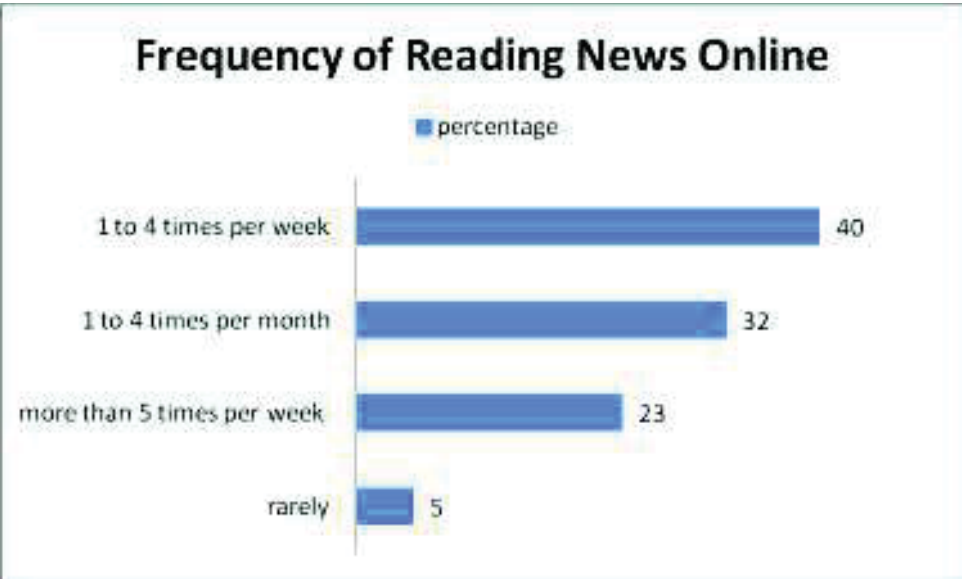


Chart 6: Top Read topics in Newspapers

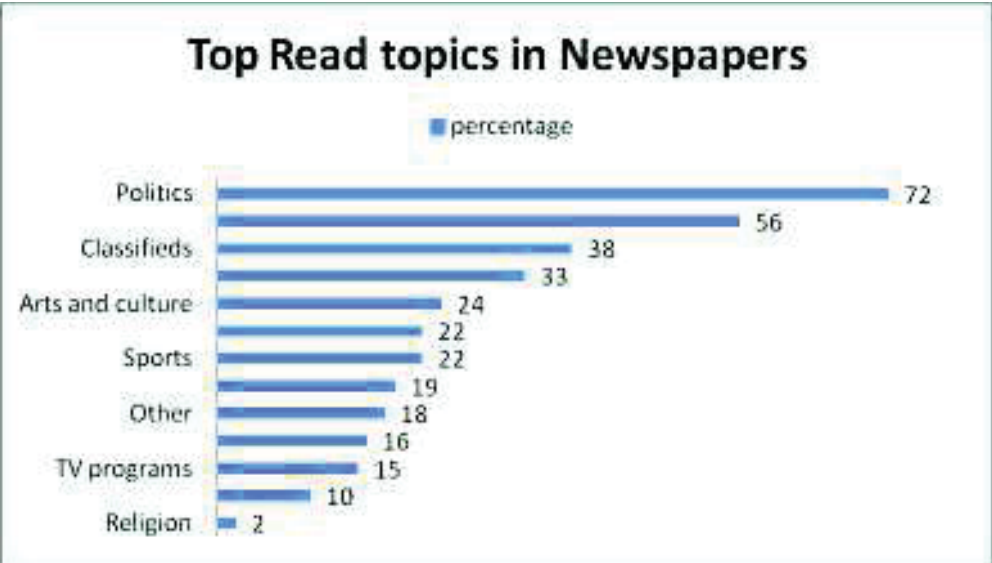
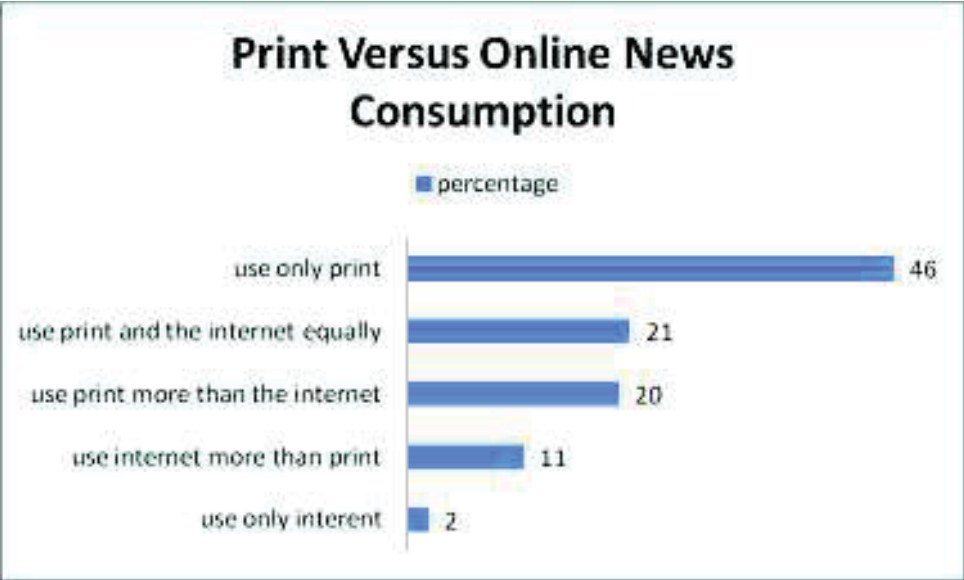


Chart 7: Print Versus Online News Consumption



Appendix G: Significant Dates and Events that Formed *Annahar's* History

Dates	Events
Between the years 1933 and 1939	<i>Annahar</i> was suspended from publishing for more than fifteen times because it criticized the policy of the French mandate and called for the election of a constitutional Lebanese government.
During the II World War	<i>Annahar</i> was censored because it published articles that called for an independent country and the rights of the Lebanese to decide their own fate.
In 1942	<i>Annahar</i> promoted the creation of a Journalist's Association to preserve the rights and liberties of the press and to demand legislation assuring fair trial and protection of the press from arbitrary suspension. The association has evolved into the press Syndicate, a national body with binding authority in all professional matters.
Between 1948 and 1952	<i>Annahar</i> launched what became henceforth its trade in stock: campaigns against corruption and authoritarian government. It was sued before military and civil courts, again suspended from publication, and its editor publisher, Ghassan Tuani, was sentenced to varying prison terms.
Throughout the sixties	<i>Annahar</i> remained steadfast in exposing government abuses in spite of physical threats, coercion and financial pressure.
During 1968 and 1970	During the parliamentary elections of 1968 and the presidential elections of 1970, <i>Annahar</i> became the main force behind the various groups fighting for the preservation of republican institutions and the safeguarding of legal norms against an anti-democratic drift.
In 1972	<i>Annahar</i> launched Gebran Tuani's Library
In 1974	' <i>Annahar Center for Research and Documentation</i> ' was launched.
In 1976	Syrian troops entered Lebanon and shortly thereafter occupied <i>Annahar's</i> offices. Publication was again suspended for 18 days.
In 1977	An Arabic weekly was published in Paris under the name of " <i>Annahar Arab and International</i> "(ANAI) to avoid the Syrian censorship.
In 1979	The publication (ANAI) was re-launched in Beirut with Gebran Tuani, as the editor-in-chief.
In 1981	Armed Palestinians broke into the premises of (ANAI) and forced the young staff to leave the western sector of Beirut, where the weekly's offices were set-up, upon their return from Paris.
In 1982	During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, <i>Annahar</i> head office was shelled and publication was suspended, this time for seven days.
In 1983	The ANAI new building was shelled by local gunmen and the magazine was compelled to change offices.
In 1984	The 'sector' to which ANAI had moved was equally unwelcoming: Militiamen entered the magazine's offices and destroyed its archives.
In 1990	In the absence of any state authority, militiamen forced the magazine to stop publication.
On 13 May 1991	Nasrat Khayash was assassinated.

In January 1993	<i>Annahar</i> won the prize of the ‘‘Second Best International Newspaper’’(after the <i>Financial Times</i>) nominated by the ‘‘Prizes for World Journalism’’.
In 1996	<i>Annahar</i> launched its online version as a PDF format.
On 23 December 1996	Journalist Pierre Attalah was kidnapped.
February 2002	<i>Annahar</i> launched a special Sunday edition which consists of <i>Nahar Al Chabab</i> , <i>Nahar Al Riyada</i> and <i>Nahar il Internet</i> .
On 1 October 2004	Journalists Marwan Hmadeh’s car was bombed, but he miraculously survived.
On 2 June 2005	Journalist Samir Kasir was assassinated
On 12 December 2005	Gebran Tueni was assassinated.

Sources:

- *Annahar Brochure*, 1993, available at:

<http://www.annahar.com/aboutus.php?type=who&table=who&day=Wed#anchor> [retrieved 20 June 2009], pp. 7-12

- Tueni, G., 1995. ‘The Secret of the Profession and Other Secrets’, Beirut: Dar Annahar for Publication, pp. 18-77

Appendix H: Article of Charles Ayoub on *Aldiyar* financial Supporters

**‘Who Governs Lebanon? Security officials or State or justice officials?
A security source threatens revenge and says let he who has ears to listen.’**

Aldiyar newspaper, 3 November 2012

By Charles Ayoub

One day, the late Gen. Wessam al-Hassan called me to ask if my newspaper *Al-Diyar* could take a middle line between the March 8th and March 14th movements. I replied in the affirmative, so he asked me what March 8th would do [as a result of the paper’s shifting its loyalty]. I said that I stand by my principles as long as this doesn’t cause friction for me with March 8th. At the same time I can take a solid stand with you regarding March 14th. Prime Minister Hariri brought his hand to his chest and said “I will pay \$150,000 per month [for you] to advance the news of the Future Party [the largest member of the March 14th movement] and to not attack the March 14th movement in *Al-Diyar*.” Of course, people talk about payments [to journalists] but they do not bear in mind that this is actually a kind of exchange that allows the publisher to pay salaries and cover the cost of paper and printing. General al-Hassan...then informed me that Sheikh Saad Hariri is honest and that the amount will be lowered from \$150,000 to \$100,000 in return for truthful and positive news about March 14th to be extended over six pages in the newspaper.

Later, General al-Hassan called to ask me to come to the General Directorate of the Division of Information. He informed me that he had been in Paris and had met with Hariri and that they had decided to cancel the assistance. I asked why, but was given no answer except that Saad Hariri’s financial circumstances were tight. But [I said] *Al-Diyar* had honored its commitment to take a middle line between the two movements, and as a consequence its distribution dropped by two thousand copies. *Al-Diyar* had respected its deal to publish news of March 14th, and followed, to the word, General al-Hassan’s request to be a Christian “middle of the road” paper and not to oppose March 14th. This is what happened.

I told [General al-Hassan] that I was surprised by the cutting off of funds since we had made no mistake. He said “It’s not matter of you having done the wrong thing. On the contrary, you were right. The issue is that Saad Hariri is in a difficult financial position.” I told him I was not convinced, and that [he] and Prime Minister Saad Hariri, as well as a third party that created conflict between us, were responsible for stopping the subsidy. You will see now what it feels like to have *Al-Diyar* opposing you [I said]. [This is how] I started my press campaign against the Future Party, Saad Hariri, and General al-Hassan, to make them comply with what they had agreed with me.

Appendix I: Charles Ayoub Called Charbel Khalil ‘a Piece of Shit’

In the midst of all the tensions that *Aldiyar* in general, and Charles Ayoub specifically, were facing in 2009, Charbel Khalil, a Lebanese producer and comic writer, indirectly mocked the newspaper and its owner. In a sketch entitled: ‘A gift from his ideas’ as part of his TV show *Basmat Watan* (‘A Nation Smiles’ or ‘A Nation That Died,’ depending on how it is pronounced), Khalil presented a journalist who could not find a way to sell his newspaper. So, he finally decided to distribute it free of charge with some vegetables rolled in the newspaper as an additional gift to increase the number of its readers. The next day, a woman visited the journalist and asked for the free vegetables leaving the newspaper behind. (see sketch on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICfoO1yxIks>)

On 14 May 2009, in the same show but in a different episode, Charbel Khalil made fun of a journalist whom he named ‘Barhoum Bilsayli’ in one of the sketches entitled ‘His level is ...’; in this sketch, Khalil showed that the journalist’s articles were so bad that one can use them instead of toilet paper. (see sketch on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4zWow1HPTI&feature=related>)

Although Charbel Khalil in both sketches did not mention either the name of Charles Ayoub nor *Al-Diyar*, the next day on 15 May, Charles Ayoub wrote an article in *Aldiyar* with the title: ‘Charbel Khalil, the piece of shit’. In a 294-word article, Ayoub mentioned the word ‘shit’ before and after Khalil’s name ten times. He also disrespected Khalil’s place of birth, which is in Keserwan area where Ayoub was a candidate for the election at the time; moreover, he assaulted Khalil’s parents by saying that ‘Charbel Khalil does not know his father and his DNA goes back to a Fiji soldier’; besides, he attacked the Television station LBC, where the show was broadcast and its CEO, Mr. Pierre Al Daher. To add insult to injury, Ayoub published a picture near the article with a Fiji soldier pulling a dog with Charbel Khalil’s face. The picture and the article are attached below.

شربل خليل الخرى



بعد التفتيش بالحمض النووي لشربل خليل على مستوى قاريا وحراجل وغيرها، تبين ان الحمض النووي يعود لجندي فيدجي خدم في لبنان عند بداية مجيء القوات الدولية وله ذات الحمض الذي ينتمي إليه شربل خليل.

ومن يكون شربل خليل؟ جاهل، امي، اعطاه بيار الضاهر شاشة، فراح بواسطة الحمض النووي الفيدجي يضحك بعض المشاهدين ويضحكهم بصورته الفيدجية على الشاشة، امس مات شربل خليل، انتهى عند اللبنانيين وبات دمية تتحرك على شاشة قوية يستعملها كيفما يشاء، لكنه هو صغير وصغير، فانتقل الى رحمة شيطانه وانتهى.

اما القراء فسيستغربون كيف سنطلق عليه كلمة خرى، ففي ذوق متايل كان يتحدث الناس عن برنامج يسمات وطن، لكنهم لا يعرفونه إلا باسم شربل خرى، وإذا حاولت الدفاع عنه بأن اسمه ليس شربل خرى، فيجيبون أخرى من الخرى، وما استطعنا لاقناع هؤلاء الناس سبيلاً.

المشكلة ان بيار الضاهر يوافق على هذه النوعية، و«الديار» لم تعد مشكلتها مع شربل خليل، وهي التي رفضت نشر دعوى سوء ائتمان ضد بيار الضاهر، بل قالت عنها انها دعوى من سمير جعجع ضد بيار الضاهر.

لم يقابل الضاهر الجميل والحسنى بالحسنى، بل ترك الخرى خرى. نقول لبيار الضاهر نحن نعرف من الخرى، ونقول لم

تعد مشكلتنا مع الوسخ، المشكلة القادمة هي مع بيار الضاهر، فمنذ تحقيق الكنيسة ولجونه الى «الديار» للدفاع عنه بوجه اخصامه سليمان فرنجية وعصام فارس وصولاً الى يومنا هذا، حيث يواجه جميع الآن بيار الضاهر، انت اقوى من جريدتنا بكثير، ولكن حافظ على مشيختك ومحملتك، لأن المشكلة معك انت في المرة القادمة، ولا يمكنك كصاحب مزرعة ان تفلت كلاباً ونقول لا علاقة لي بهم.

بيار الضاهر نقول لك، راسك برأسنا وأحد الرؤوس سيطير بالكلام المكتوب او بالسكتش المكتوب.

أما خرى الفيدجي سيبلي خرى، شربل خليل، لا يعرف والده، ولا يعرف انه بندوق، لكن نحن نقول لبيار الضاهر تحملنا ما تحملناه فليحل مشكله مع الآخرين وليتس «الديار» لأن «الديار» سكين لا يرحم.

«الديار»

Source: *Aldiyar*. 2009, 'Charbel Khalil: The Shit', 15 May

Appendix J: Charles Ayoub's Attack on *Champress*

On April 21, 2009, the Syrian website *Champress*, which is close to the Syrian regime, published a vicious article attacking Charles Ayoub. The article entitled: "May God Curse you Gambler Charles Ayoub", mentioned that "*Charles Ayoub recently received a character reference from Saed Al-Hariri, after he became a mouthpiece 'subordinate' in exchange for a fistful of dollars (...). Charles Ayoub, of the free and brave words, sold his soul to the devil (...) May Allah curse the money of the Al-Hariris' debauchery, which turned Charles Ayoub, who was known for his courage, into a petty clerk in Qouraitem [Palace of Al-Hariri's home], similar to mercenaries and rabble. On this occasion, I don't think there is any need to remind the honourable Syrian Communications Ministry that the Lebanese Aldiyar newspaper is infected, and that the Syrian reader no longer needs it*" [www.champress.net , retrieved 21 April 2009].

Charles Ayoub, why do you drag your reputation in the dirt? Why do you bury your history? Why do you sell your honour on the slave market?, available at: <http://www.champress.net/> [retrieved 23 April 2009]

Two days later, Charles Ayoub replied to *Champress*'s accusations in an article published in his newspaper *Al-Diyar*, on 23 April 2009. Ayoub wrote: *To the journalists on this website: You [live] under a [non-democratic] presidential regime, [while] Lebanon has a democratic parliamentary regime - and under Lebanon's regime a journalist is entitled to criticize any MP or faction in parliament. I feel sorry for anyone who writes against me on Champress, because he is a tool in the hands of someone who [tells him what] to write (...) I challenge any senior Syrian official [who claims to have] served Syria more than I have in the past 21 years to compete with me [in loyalty to Syria]. Even though [the Syrian officials] brought me down in the [1996] elections, and lied to me, I did not change my position - [a position of] support and love for Syria...*

[Champress] says that I have changed from a tiger into a mouse... We saw you [Syrian officials] during the investigation of Detlev Mehlis [then-commissioner of the U.N. International Independent Investigation Commission on the assassination

of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Al-Hariri] , and how you sat for hours as he interrogated you - we did not see tigers in front of Mehlis (...) You owe Charles Ayoub and Aldiyar for their toppling of Mehlis (....) If Syria wants to tell me something, let them tell me directly, not through Champress... I don't care what Champress and those behind it say. My nationalism is far superior to the corruption of those behind Champress. My nationalism and loyalty to Arab causes will continue to be much more deeply rooted than [those] of the mercenaries who have no right to choose for themselves (MEMRI, 2009).

Appendix K: Charles Ayoub Accused Aoun of Being a ‘Real Thief’

During an exclusive interview on New TV Lebanese station on May 10, 2009, General Michel Aoun replied, to a question of why he does not respond to Charles Ayoub’s accusations. He said: ‘‘When they accused Jesus Christ during his last trial, why did he not answer? Because people with great values don’t reply to those people who are less valued (...) The thief on the cross (...)’’. Then the interviewer interrupted him, so Aoun did not continue the idea of the thief. (The interview could be seen on

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0YPE18vs7g&feature=related>, [retrieved 10 May 2009]

The second day, on May 11, Ayoub wrote an article in *Aldiyar* entitled ‘Michel Aoun, the great thief who is cheating people and accusing them of banditry’; in the article Ayoub wrote: *After serving four years with you in the Lebanese army as an officer, I hope you will refresh your memory as you remember that you were the real thief and stealer. You should remember that Charles Ayoub is a man of honour, dynamism and nobility whereas you are the real thief who is cheating the Lebanese people (...) Finally, I have yet to tell you: You described yourself as Jesus Christ, and Christ did not escape (...) He was crucified on the cross, whereas you left your soldiers and your family and fled away*¹¹⁷*(...) Ayoub added: Your strong yearning to be in authority and power has slaughtered Lebanon to the extent that you described yourself as Jesus Christ while you are in reality Judas.*

On May 12, Ayoub pursued his attack on Aoun’s interview, in another article entitled ‘Michel Aoun is the thief’ in which he wrote: *I was shocked with what cheap level Aoun spoke about me. I have my own mistakes but no one can accuse me of being a thief. I asked my friends who confirmed the story of Aoun calling me a thief and how he narrated stories on Christ and thieves*¹¹⁸. He added: *I, Charles Ayoub, is warning you, General Aoun, not to insult my name again from now on. I*

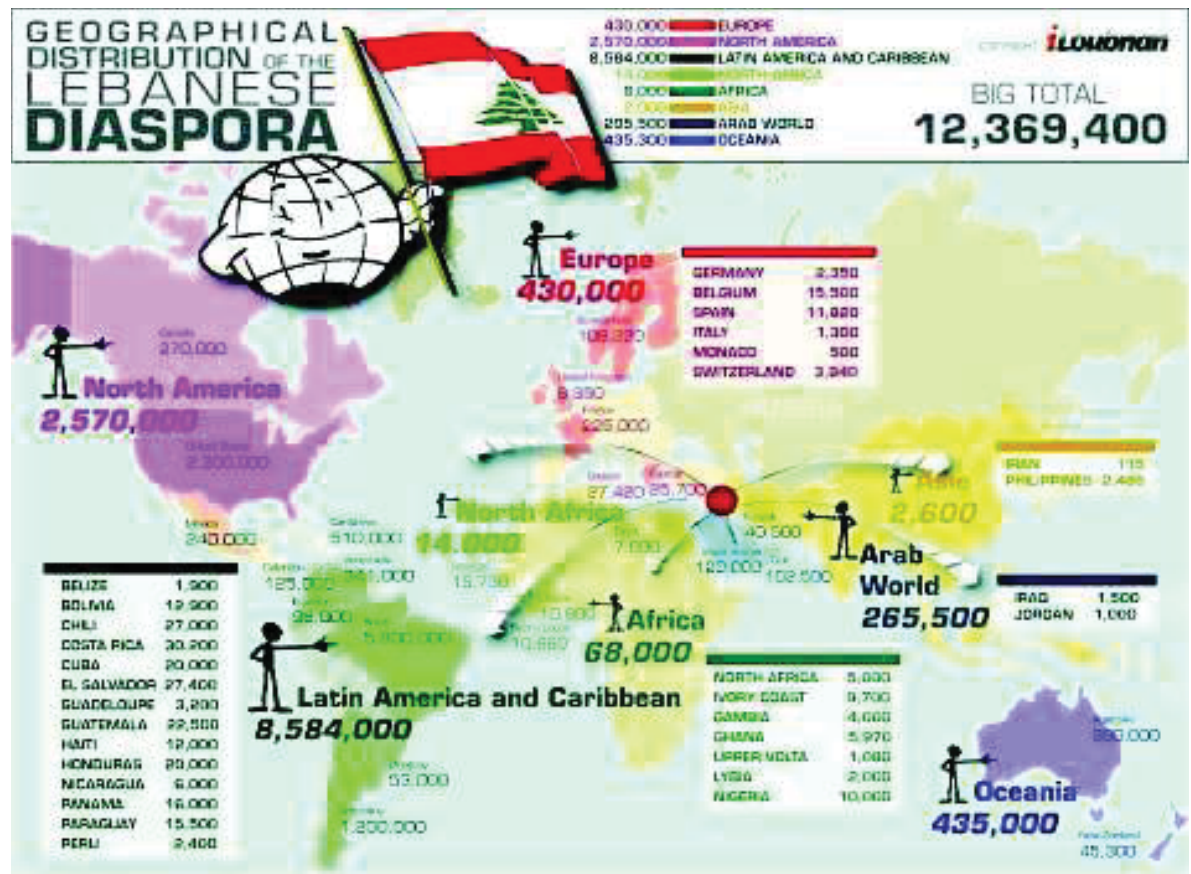
¹¹⁷ Charles Ayoub is referring here to the incident when Aoun escaped to the French embassy and then to Paris as a political refuge on 13 October 1990

¹¹⁸ Ayoub stated in the introduction of his article that he was at a friend’s house and did not watch the interview himself.

will uncover all your files and scandals which you and I know Your only way to silence me is to send me to the grave with my secrets.... And I know that you possess the tools to do this (Ayoub, 12 May 2009).

Although General Michel Aoun did not clearly accuse Charles Ayoub of being a thief, the latter used his newspaper *Aldiyar* to publish all his hatred of Aoun. Ayoub even accused Aoun of receiving money for his campaign in 2009. He literally said: *As a Christian, I swear on the cross, with my hand on the statue of the Virgin Mary if Michel Aoun did not receive recently \$100 million in the form of contributions,, I call upon the Virgin to wither my hand with cancer* (MEMRI TV, No. 2140, 2 June 2009).

Appendix L: Lebanese Diaspora: World Wide Geographical Distribution



Source: Sabbagh, D. 2009. 'Geographical Distribution of the Lebanese Diaspora', *Lebanese Heritage*, 6 September, available: <http://theidentitychef.com/2009/09/06/lebanese-diaspora-worldwide-geographical-distribution/> [retrieved 12 July 2014]